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I

THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU

(SEASONS 1924-25 TO 1927-28)

By HAROLD H. NELSON

II

THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE AND PALACE OF MEDINET HABU

(SEASON 1927-28)

By UVO HOELSCHER



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FOREWORD

It is now exactly a century since the first man able to read Egyptian hieroglyphs began the effort to record the inscriptions still *in situ* in Egypt by means of modern hand copies. On January 1, 1829, having made the voyage up the Nile, the great decipherer François Champollion began his personal records of the inscribed monuments on the river at Wadi Halfa just below the Second Cataract. He was able to spend only eight and a half months in carrying this work down the Nile. Arriving at Antinoë on September 11, 1829, he writes, "Mon voyage des recherches est terminé."

The Prussian expedition under Lepsius, which spent three years on the Nile, was naturally able to produce a larger volume of copies; but all this early work, including that of Champollion together with that of an Italian mission and of the Prussian expedition, covered but a tiny fraction of the exposed monuments. There still remained *in situ* an enormous body of monuments of which no adequate record was then or has since been made available. It is of course true, moreover, that, in spite of our feeling of gratitude and admiration for the work accomplished by these earlier expeditions, the science of epigraphy had at that time not yet been born. It is especially the earlier instalments of Mommsen's great *Corpus* of the Latin inscriptions which illustrate the fact that, even in the more familiar classical languages, accurate facsimiles of inscriptions were difficult to secure. It is no reflection upon the work of the earlier expeditions to say that the monuments which they copied must be recorded again in accordance with the requirements of modern epigraphic accuracy.

But even the process of recording exclusively by hand, as it was practiced in the middle decades of the last century, soon ceased after the extraordinary excavations of Auguste Mariette had begun; and the interest of the Western World from that time on was expressed chiefly in *excavating* expeditions in the Nile Valley. Almost the only exception has been the admirable effort of the Egypt Exploration Society, as illustrated in its volumes on the temple of Deir el-Bahari and the tombs of Thebes and elsewhere. It is much to the credit of

the Metropolitan Museum of New York that, almost from the beginning of its researches in Egypt, it has recognized the work of recording as a serious responsibility of modern science. Neither can we fail to recognize with appreciation the endeavor of de Morgan, although himself not a philologist or epigrapher, to provide a complete transcription of the inscriptions of Egypt, beginning at the First Cataract and moving northward. Although the work never passed beyond the first three volumes, and the field methods were insufficient, the effort was worthy of all recognition.

From 1905 to 1907 the University of Chicago made a complete survey of the inscriptions of Nubia from the southern limit of the monuments northward to but not including the First Cataract. But none of these efforts attempted a complete *corpus* such as Mommsen had planned from the beginning; and none of them made a systematic effort toward a permanent organization. Hence, an enormous volume of Egyptian records is still unsalvaged. Realizing the vast extent of these records and the necessity for a permanent organization to cope with such a situation, the Oriental Institute has from the first endeavored not only to develop the most highly perfected practical field methods for producing accurate facsimiles but also to effect an efficient and permanent field organization. With these ends in view, the Institute has organized a permanent Epigraphic Expedition with its present headquarters in two buildings near the temple of Medinet Habu. If this staff and organization have developed as an efficient working machine, this success is due in no small measure to the efficient leadership of Dr. Harold H. Nelson as field director of the expedition.

The selection of the temple of Medinet Habu for beginning this work of inscription salvage was made for obvious reasons. Many of its records have remained entirely unpublished, and those available in old copies are singularly incomplete. The subject matter is of unique interest, revealing to us as it does for the first time the emergence of Europe as an influential power in the political and military arena of the ancient Oriental world. The incoming barbarian Greeks, shifting continually southward out of the Balkans, were overwhelming and driving out the population of the area later called Greece, till its defeated and dethroned leaders sought a refuge in Egypt and Western Asia in the closing centuries of the second millennium B.C. These rec-

ords of Medinet Habu thus reveal to us the repercussion of the Greek migration and conquest, as these great events were felt among the nations of the Near East. Obviously such historical sources are of far-reaching interest and importance. Their artistic and archaeological value is equally great. The plates of this expedition throw an entirely new light on Ramessid art and will without doubt modify current opinion regarding its usually accepted decadence.

The first step in the practical process of saving these records is a series of many hundreds of photographs, which have been very much enlarged to the size of an artist's portable drawing-board. With these the artists go to the wall, where they inspect the original inscription and also do much penciling directly on the enlargement. With India ink the artists then carefully trace all the lines of the original directly on the face of the photographic enlargement. The ink-traced photograph is then bleached in a chemical bath so that the photograph disappears, leaving only white paper bearing ink lines. From this ink drawing the darkroom assistants, native Egyptian boys, then make contact negatives, printed on brown iron-paper. Thereupon these paper negatives make very simple the production of blueprints which can be cut up into sections and pasted on convenient correspondence-size sheets of paper, leaving ample margins for corrections. The epigraphers then take these blueprints to the wall, where they compare the artists' work, sign by sign, with the original inscription. This is a kind of "proofreading" which is done repeatedly, with the purpose of eliminating all mistakes. When the artists have entered all the corrections on the drawings, the result is a facsimile of each inscription containing far more than a photograph can record. This facsimile combines three things: the speed and accuracy of the camera, the skill and clearness of the artist, and finally the reading ability of the epigrapher, who sees much which is not recorded by camera or artist.

It will be seen that this work has required a highly specialized staff, made up chiefly of epigraphers, artists, and photographers. Besides Dr. Nelson, the epigraphic staff has consisted of Dr. C. R. Williams, Dr. W. F. Edgerton, and Dr. J. H. Wilson, all of them formerly graduate students and now doctors of the University of Chicago. The staff of artists has been made up of A. Bollacher, V. Canziani, J. A. Chubb, and more recently L. J. Longley. It is fitting to com-



FIG. 1. CHICAGO HOUSE, SEEN FROM THE WESTERN CLIFFS

The Oriental Institute's headquarters in Egypt consist of two buildings, the nearer of which includes the Rosenwald Library (Fig. 3). Along the wind-blown sands in the foreground stretches the road which serves Chicago House. Its buildings, standing at the extreme edge of the desert, overlook the fertile western plain, where tower the two Colossi of Memnon. In the background flows the Nile; and on its farther (eastern) bank lies Luxor, with modern hotels and shops surrounding its ancient temple colonnades. A little to the right, outside of this picture, stands Medinet Habu, where the work herein described has been carried on.

memorate here the faithful services of our first photographer, J. Hartman, who died not long after the beginning of his second season's work. He was succeeded by O. E. Lind and A. Q. Morrison. As librarian, the expedition enjoys the services of Miss Phoebe G. Byles; and its now large volume of clerical business is managed by I. J. Khuri.

Early in the work it was discerned that an exclusively epigraphic record of the great Medinet Habu temple and its neighboring buildings would be very insufficient. It was highly desirable that the expedition should be expanded and should have associated with it a staff trained and equipped to produce also an *architectural survey* of the Medinet Habu buildings. It was hoped, furthermore, that such a survey might be extended to the other ancient buildings of Egypt. It is one of the deplorable gaps in our available records of Egypt that no comprehensive architectural survey of the country has ever been made. In the winter of 1926-27 the organization of the desired Architectural Survey was effected. Headed by Professor U. Hoelscher, it was placed under the direction of the Epigraphic Expedition. Professor Hoelscher is assisted by H. Steckeweh as building engineer, and also by H. Hanson. The researches of this survey have involved the Institute in the complete excavation of the huge Medinet Habu inclosure, a task requiring some four seasons of work. This project is now in its second season.

The need for housing these two staffs, many members of which are married, and for commodious workrooms, photographic laboratory, drafting-rooms, etc., involved the building and equipment of extensive headquarters at Medinet Habu (Figs. 1 and 2). In course of time it proved increasingly difficult to carry on the work, and especially to maintain a growing staff of young scientists, completely isolated from all access to a scientific library. Since the erection and equipment of the Rosenwald Library (Fig. 3), the first scientific library in Upper Egypt, the life of the entire staff has been completely transformed. Evening classes in hieroglyphic have grown up in the library alcoves, members of other expeditions frequently work in its reading-room, foreign scholars find reference to its shelves invaluable, and the work of our own expedition has grown in efficiency and confidence as the staff has been able to survey and compare the work of



FIG. 2. CHICAGO HOUSE, SEEN FROM THE THEBAN PLAIN

The fertile plain in the foreground is annually inundated by the Nile. Protected by an embankment from the encroachment of the river, Chicago House stands at the desert's edge. Behind it, tawny cliffs rise to the plateau of the Sahara. In the Valley of the Kings' Tombs, a natural basin just behind the Theban cliffs, were buried the great Pharaohs of the Egyptian Empire. The spot is now known to all the world as the site of Tutenkhamon's tomb.

Chicago House, some 220 feet long, is in two parts, divided by a little avenue. Visible in this picture are the open-air veranda (right), the domed living-room (center), the dining-hall (with three arched windows), and some of the living-quarters (extreme left). In the second building, behind and parallel to this one, are the Rosenwald Library, drafting-room, general offices, living-quarters, electric generator plant, and garage.

oriental science in Egypt during the entire century of its existence. The resulting encouragement and inspiration have been of incalculable value.

Like the Institute as a whole, the Epigraphic Expedition owes its beginnings and its first building to the generosity of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Mr. Julius Rosenwald later contributed funds for the



FIG. 3.—INTERIOR VIEW OF THE ROSENWALD LIBRARY

enlargement of the first building and the erection of a second which should include also the library. The General Education Board then appropriated funds for the purchase of the books and an endowment for the maintenance of the library. As this report goes to press, the work of the Institute has been assured permanence by the gift of funds for a new headquarters building at the University of Chicago, an endowment for teaching, and an annual subvention for the maintenance of all its researches at home and abroad for the next ten years.

The subjoined report is intended as a sketch of the work of the

two sections of the Institute organization at Medinet Habu, the first report being the work of Dr. Nelson, the second, that of Professor Hoelscher. Both of these gentlemen, and likewise the staff, are, as it seems to the editor, to be congratulated on the success of the work which they have accomplished. The first instalment of collotype plates containing the facsimiles of the reliefs and inscriptions of Medinet Habu will be issued in 1929; but the results of the Architectural Survey, which is now engaged in the excavation of the palace around the great Medinet Habu temple, will not appear in final form until some later date. It is expected that the records on the temple walls, when completed by the Epigraphic Survey, will be published in a series of probably five volumes, while the Architectural Survey of the buildings will fill at least one additional volume.

JAMES HENRY BREASTED

NAPLES

January 14, 1929

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I

THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU

(SEASONS 1924-25 TO 1927-28)

By HAROLD H. NELSON

The history of the lands around the eastern end of the Mediterranean is full of seemingly cataclysmic disturbances which from time to time have swept away governments, have wrought untold misery to hundreds of thousands of people, and have introduced new elements into an already greatly mixed population. When, however, the upheaval has ended and normal political life has returned once more, it has soon been evident in most instances that no profound change has resulted from the turmoil. The masses may have received new masters, old dynasties may have given way to new; but the same social structure, with perhaps a few changes here and there, has emerged from the storm almost unshaken, the new racial elements have been little by little assimilated, and the dominant type of society that had been slowly evolving through the centuries has continued to mold the individual to its form without noticeable deflection from the immemorial line of development.

The year 1200 B.C. marked roughly the culmination of one such disturbance in the political life of the Ancient East, which produced a real change, as profound perhaps as any that has swept over those lands—a change unrivaled in its far-reaching effects save by the conquests of Alexander, the spread of Islam, or the transformations still in process that have followed the World War. The old state system of the second millennium B.C. was the zenith of the Bronze Age culture of the Orient. That millennium saw the fall of the empire of the

First Dynasty of Babylon, the great days of the Minoan civilization, the rise and decline of the Egyptian world-power of the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Dynasty, the first expansion of Assyria on the west of the Euphrates and its precipitate retirement, and both the emergence and the eclipse of the Hittite dominance. With the beginning of the first millennium B.C. a new group of states appeared, heirs to the earlier cultures, but different in name and greater in power. The Assyrian Empire, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, belonged to a world more comprehensible to the modern man; for the older world had advanced another step along the lines of political and cultural development. The newer society would have been utterly impossible without the older orders of the second millennium behind it.

About four centuries before 1200 B.C., the Egyptian princes of Thebes in Upper Egypt, then apparently vassals of the Hyksos, the foreign lords of Lower Egypt, put themselves at the head of the accumulated national resentment arising from the harsh rule of these invaders and in a series of campaigns drove out the stranger. Into the position of power left vacant by the departure of the Hyksos the Thebans stepped, and found themselves the masters of Egypt with more real power over the country than any other line of rulers had possessed since the early kings of the Fourth Dynasty. Pursuing the retreating invaders into Palestine, these new, military Pharaohs established Egyptian power on such a basis that, in spite of intervals of mismanagement and internal disorganization at home, the name of Pharaoh was that most feared for centuries. Pushing on, they laid their hands upon Syria also, until in the region of the upper Euphrates, from Aleppo eastward, they encountered the new and vigorous kingdom of Mitanni, which brought their advance to an end.

The period elapsing between the middle of the fifteenth century, when Egypt and Mitanni first met, and the middle of the twelfth century, when Mitanni had disappeared and the Egyptian and Hittite empires had collapsed, is politically dominated by the struggle between the two latter powers for the control of Syria-Palestine. By the middle of the thirteenth century a sort of balance had been evolved. Mitanni had disappeared as an independent kingdom, ground to pieces amid the struggles of its neighbors; and its position in North

Syria had been taken by the Hittites of Asia Minor under a vigorous line of rulers. International relations among the kings of the day assumed a system and were carried on along lines of policy fairly clearly discernible from a large mass of contemporary documents. An orderly world, as international relations go, seemed to be emerging; and an equilibrium among the powers appeared to have been attained. But just when the pattern began to form in the kaleidoscope of shifting peoples and incessant wars, the incoming of a new racial element, taking advantage of the internal decay following on imperial achievement, brought about the sweeping change already spoken of as culminating about 1200 B.C.

The new peoples who were the instruments by which this change was wrought were the archaic Greeks and related tribes. In a series of invasions from the Balkans they swept over the shores and islands of the Aegean, brought to a close the wonderful society of Minoan days, developed the Mycenaean and kindred cultures, and confronted the Hittites of Asia Minor who stood in the way of their advance inland from the Aegean littoral. This struggle between the newcomers and the representatives of the old mainland culture gave rise, among other events, to the Trojan War, in which Troy attempted to hold the gate against what she probably regarded as barbarism. In the end the ancient stronghold fell. By that time, about 1200 B.C., the tide of invasion from Europe had swept across Asia Minor, broken up the Hittite Empire, and spread out over the peninsula. In all this turmoil elements of the older populations were dislodged from their places; and if they were not caught up by the advancing wave of invasion, they fled before it in search of new homes. Many of these northerners, both newcomers and vanquished, were well acquainted with the sea. The earlier appearances of the barbarians must probably be regarded as piratical descents upon the rich islands and coastal cities. As the disintegration of the older states went on, these ancient "vikings" probably increased in numbers and extended their depredations farther and farther to the south till at last they reached the shores of Africa. There they found in the rich cities of the Nile Delta a most attractive prize awaiting successful adventure, together with a political situation apparently presenting excellent opportunity for their

piratical attacks. Hence it came about that they allied themselves with the ancient enemies of Egypt, the Libyans, and fell upon the rich and flourishing districts of the Delta.

From the beginning of Egyptian history the Libyans living to the west of the Delta had been attracted by the rich lands of their neighbors and, whenever opportunity presented itself, had attempted to cross the border into these fertile regions watered by the Nile. Under the relaxing grasp of the aged Ramses II, Egyptian control of the frontier would seem to have weakened; and his son, Merneptah, found himself faced by a formidable eastward movement of the border tribes. It was in connection with these efforts of the Libyans to settle in the Delta that the sea-rovers of the North found an opportunity to attack the Delta coasts. Merneptah was able, after strenuous efforts, to beat off both the Libyans and the northerners; but though he claimed a complete victory, it is quite apparent that the danger was more formidable than the Pharaoh would have us believe. In the troubled years following Merneptah's death the Libyan menace was renewed. When shortly after 1200 B.C. Ramses III came to the throne, he too found the safeguarding of his western Delta districts a problem calling for his best efforts. Under date of the year 5 of his reign he records what he would have us regard as an overwhelming victory over the hereditary foe. The same account also speaks of troubles in Syria and of raids by the northern peoples. In the account as it stands, however, there is no necessary connection between these events; on the other hand, there is no conclusive evidence to the contrary. It would at least seem that by the Pharaoh's fifth year Egypt found herself on the defensive all along her northern frontiers.

Again, under date of the eighth year of his reign, Ramses III recorded another attack from the North, this time a far more threatening danger than the earlier piratical raids of his own or preceding reigns. Whereas the earlier efforts of the northern hordes had consisted merely of attacks by sea upon the coastal regions of the Delta, the troubles in Syria recorded under the year 8 and probably under the year 5 also had apparently been caused by a mass movement from Asia Minor in which the peoples of the southern part of the peninsula, dislodged from their homes by the newcomers from Europe, had moved southward not only in a military *invasion* but in a comprehensive *migration*, with their families and possessions, to seek new

homes in the Asiatic provinces of Egypt. Ramses III seems to have appreciated the formidable nature of the crisis. He must fight by both land and sea, for the enemy ships would seem to have co-operated with the main body moving by land. The local resources of Palestine,



FIG. 4.—EGYPTIAN INFANTRY ON THE MARCH, SHOWING FOREIGN MERCENARIES

The artist has plainly attempted to suggest the representative character of the imperial army, composed as it was of troops from various nationalities. In this section of the scene reproduced on Plate VII of *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, we have first a rank of native Egyptians, then three ranks of foreigners. Of these latter, the foremost are Sherden, men with horned helmets surmounted by a ball or disk, alternating with warriors wearing feathered headdresses, possibly Philistines. Then comes a group of Bedouins from the Sinaitic desert and southern Palestine. Finally appears a Nubian contingent from the Egyptian provinces in the south. The Egyptians were plainly making an extensive and dangerous use of non-Egyptian forces as the warlike enthusiasm that had carried the Eighteenth Dynasty arms so far afield declined with the passing centuries.

all that was then left of the Asiatic empire established by the Eighteenth Dynasty, were fully drawn upon; and the Pharaoh himself led out to meet the enemy the best force at his command, composed of Egyptian foot and chariotry with contingents of foreigners, either mercenaries or slave troops (Fig. 4). In the ensuing conflict by both land and sea Ramses claims to have secured a complete victory and



FIG. 5.—TWO PHILISTINES LED CAPTIVE BY AN EGYPTIAN OFFICER

He is conducting them into the presence of the Pharaoh. Such evidence of prowess was recognized by the monarch with suitable rewards. The peculiar manacles in the form of a fish, suspended round the neck of the prisoner by a cord, are characteristic of the period. In other instances of this scene a similar device in the form of a lion is used. Just why the fish and the lion were employed is unknown.

to have destroyed or captured the enemy (Fig. 5). Be that as it may, this is the last time that we hear of these northern hordes menacing the Egyptian borders. That they were not by any means so completely annihilated as Ramses would have us believe is evident from the fact that the Philistines, who formed an important group of the enemy, were ere long settled on the Palestinian coast, well within the frontiers which Ramses claimed to have defended successfully against them.

In later years Ramses recorded further wars in Syria and against the Libyans. None of these campaigns was concerned with the northern invaders. The last dated war is that of the year 11, against the Libyans. This conflict seems to have grown out of an attack on the Delta even more determined than that of the year 5. Apparently the former defeat merely checked the Libyan advance for a time. Ramses' defense of his frontier on this occasion would seem to have been at least as successful as his previous efforts, and for the time being the danger was warded off.

Though the Pharaoh reigned for more than thirty years, we have no further record of warlike activities, the only event connected with his later years being a harem conspiracy that threatened the monarch's life. Whether this silence is due to the absence of anything deemed worthy of record, a peaceful twenty years ensuing upon the stormy period following his accession, or whether the later years were darkened by disaster and brought no victories to record, we do not know. Whatever the reason, the record, so full for the first eleven or twelve years, is silent for the latter part of Ramses III's life. We know that eventually both the Libyans and the northerners gained the objectives from which the Pharaoh had once repelled them. Little by little the former penetrated into and settled in the western Delta, while the Philistines and their allies, the Thekel, took possession of the Palestinian coastal plain. We know only the accomplished fact. When and how the frontier was crossed are hidden from us.

With the decline of imperial power after the end of Ramses III's reign, in the middle of the twelfth century B.C. the Bronze Age civilization of the second millennium B.C. came to an end. The northerners seem to have brought with them the commoner use of iron. The stage was cleared of the old combatants, and new states appeared. The world took another step along the road of its development.

Our knowledge of the earlier phases of this great migration of the

northern peoples is derived from various sources. The documentary evidence consists chiefly of the Hittite archives and the Egyptian monuments. For the final stages of the losing struggle of the old states against these newcomers we must rely almost entirely on the reliefs and inscriptions with which Ramses III adorned the walls of his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu in the necropolis of Thebes. It is from these records and a few references in the great Papyrus Harris that we learn the story of the activities of the Pharaoh's early years.

Apparently very shortly after his accession to the throne Ramses III, in accordance with immemorial custom, began his preparation for the time when he must pass from an earthly throne to become identified with the ruler of the realms of the dead. His great mortuary temple of Medinet Habu, at the southern end of the Theban necropolis, is the best preserved of all the older temples of Egypt and is evidence of the thoroughness with which he made these preparations (Fig. 6). The temple is a large building, about 140 meters long and 50 meters wide (Fig. 7). Its rear halls are largely in ruins, the upper portions of their columns, with the roof they supported, being lost. Many of the side rooms where the cultus objects were stored, and others which served as minor chapels, still survive largely or even wholly intact. More important is the extraordinary preservation of the first two courts and the outer walls of the building; for they still bear their sculptured embellishment of great war reliefs and scenes from the chief festivals celebrated in the temple, accompanied by long inscriptions—poetical effusions containing much laudation of the king but also recounting in usually obscure diction the chief military events of Ramses III's reign. These priceless records are intact save where the natural decay of the stone and the destruction caused by subsequent use of the building as a monastery and dwelling-place in Coptic days have in places inflicted considerable damage (Fig. 8).

As this building was intended to form the chief monument of his reign, Ramses III, like his predecessors under similar circumstances, covered its walls with scenes from that phase of his activities which would insure him the greatest approval in the sight of both gods and men. In the places most accessible to the general observer, that is, on the outside of the temple and in the two great courts, were carved the records of the king's public achievements—his wars, his deeds of

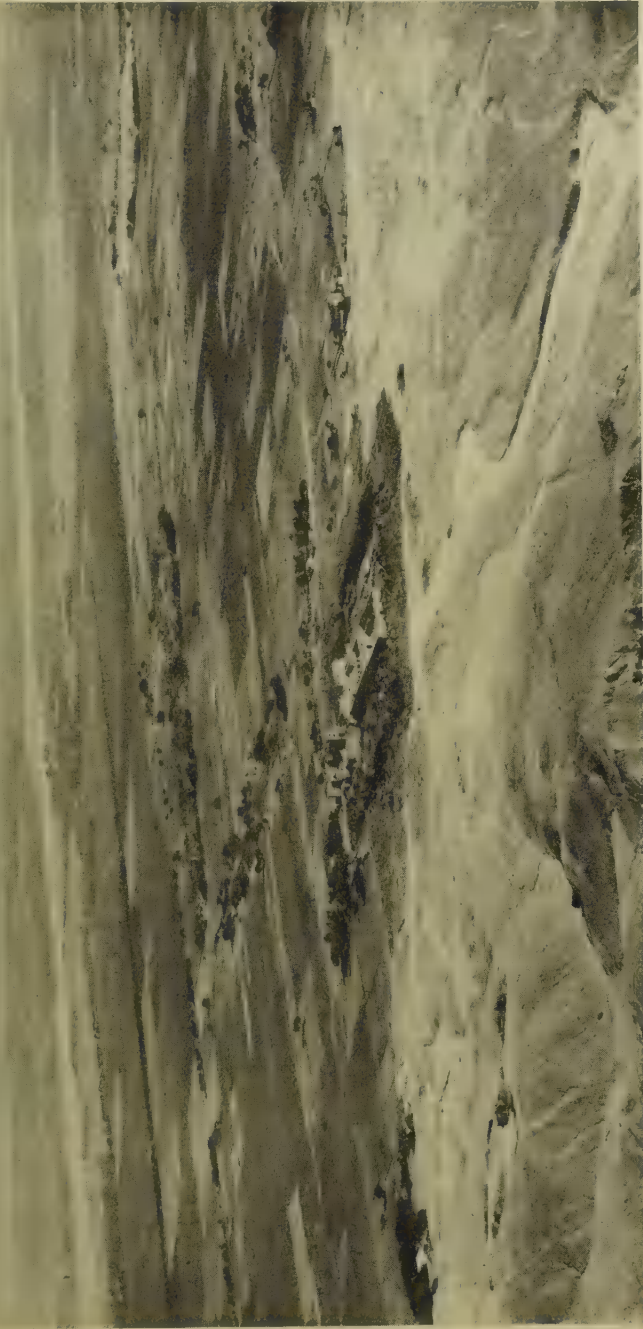


FIG. 6.—THE NILE VALLEY AS SEEN FROM THE CLIFFS BEHIND MEDINET HABU

In the middle of the picture may be seen the fortified inclosure within which stand the ruins of Ramses III's temple and other buildings of both earlier and later date. The dark mounds of earth surrounding the temple are the remains of the massive inclosure wall of unburned brick erected by the king to convert the site into a fortress as well as a temple. Just beyond the temple, in the cultivated valley bottom, appear heaps of earth marking the borders of a lake which Amenhotep III had excavated for his queen, Tiy. Farther in the distance are the Nile River and the cliffs bounding the Nile Valley on the east.



FIG. 7.—GREAT TEMPLE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU, VIEWED FROM THE NORTHEAST

On the long north wall (at right) are records of four campaigns told in words and pictures, each picture with its accompanying inscription a chapter in the war history of the time. On the front of the great pylon appear huge representations of the king slaughtering groups of his enemies before his god. Between the recesses in which stood the flag poles on each side of the main gateway are long poems lauding the king's exploits and recounting the benefits he has received from the gods. From the doorway in the north end of the pylon a stairway leads to a landing above the main entrance, whence two other stairs lead to the tops of the pylon towers.

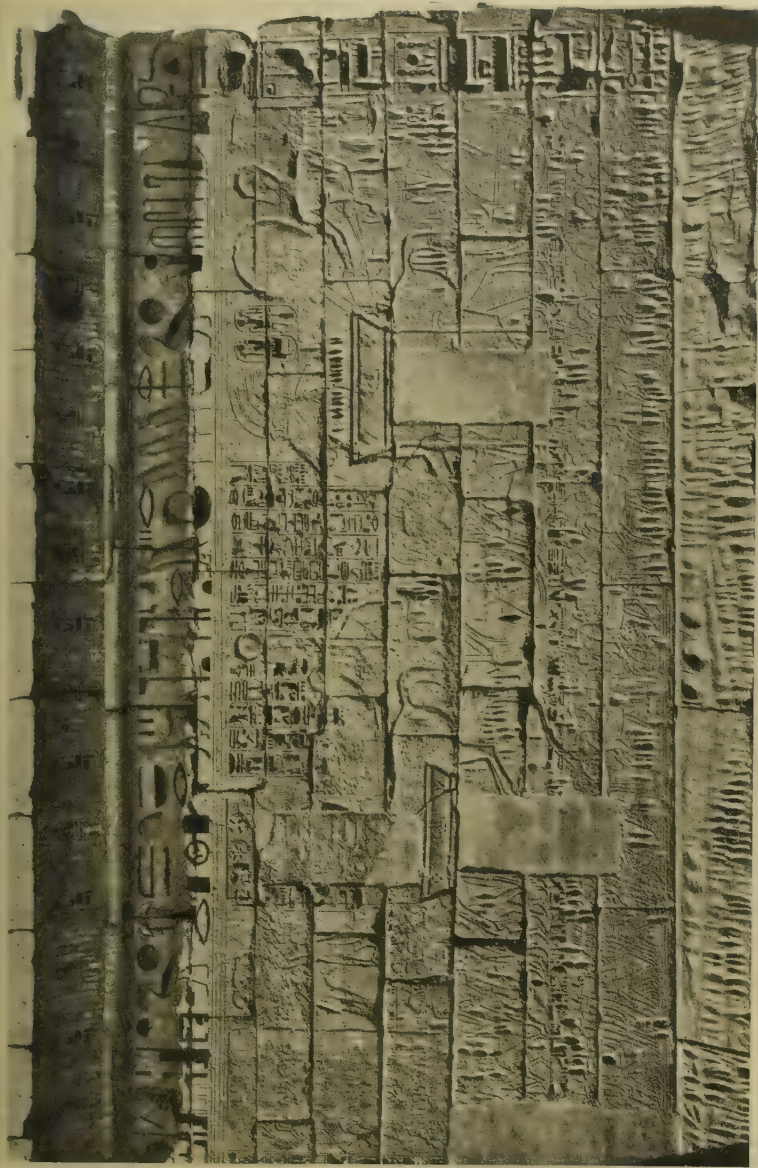


FIG. 8.—RAMSES III SETS OUT ON HIS FIRST CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LIBYANS

Before the king's chariot is another, bearing the standard of Amon. Thus the god accompanied the king on his campaign, just as the Ark of the Covenant went with the Hebrews into battle. As the inscriptions put it, the god opened the way before the Pharaoh. Before the god's chariot and also in the register below are the Egyptian forces, foot and chariotry. The relief has been sadly defaced by Coptic monks, who cut windows (modernly closed with masonry) through the wall at this spot when they converted the temple into a monastery.

prowess in the hunt, and his part in the great state festivals. The remaining portions of the building show the monarch in the performance of his religious duties, participating in the various acts of the temple service. The outside of the entire south wall from the rear to the second pylon (see Fig. 28) is covered with one of the longest inscriptions in existence, giving the chief feasts celebrated at the temple and a list of the offerings made at each feast. This festival calendar inscription, notwithstanding its enormous length, is plainly only an excerpt from a much fuller document written on papyrus and now of course lost to us. All these records were intended to bring out vividly the Pharaoh's claim on divine favor by showing his activities in behalf of the gods and thus to insure his good standing with them against the day when he himself would join them, taking his place in the world beyond among the other "great gods," his predecessors on the "Throne of Horus." A good reputation in the mouths of both men and gods was a passport to happiness in the West, the realm of the dead.

The Epigraphic Expedition of the Oriental Institute was organized in the first place to make a complete record of the Medinet Habu temple inscriptions and reliefs. The scope of the work was later extended to include the architecture as well. For two years the staff consisted of three men: an epigrapher (who was also field director), an artist, and a photographer. The inscriptional records were to be the chief interest of the expedition, the scale of the drawings made being determined by the legibility of the hieroglyphs in the final published plates. Under this system the reproduction of the reliefs was necessarily sketchy, omitting many details too small to be included in the drawings. Even on such a scale the task was a large one and would have demanded a long period for its completion.

As the work proceeded, however, several limitations of this method became apparent. In the first place, the drawing of less common signs was seen to be paleographically inadequate. The pictographic character of the Egyptian system of writing adds to many words a fulness which was lost unless the details of each individual hieroglyph could be clearly given. The determinatives of many words graphically supplement the bare root meaning by additional shades of thought unavoidably lost in the smaller scale of reproduction which was at first used. In the second place, the reliefs, upon careful study, proved to be

full of new, picturesque, interesting, and important details necessarily omitted in the sketchy drawings at first contemplated. They thus failed to record many valuable archaeological elements and fell far short of being an exhaustive record of the original wall in all particulars. In the third place, it soon became clear that the value of the reliefs as works of art was of a higher order than has generally been accredited to them. The limited scale of reproduction at first proposed failed largely to bring out effectively the *artistic* value of these great temple reliefs. In this situation we were finally confronted by a clearly defined question: Were we ready to adopt the principle of making our facsimiles a complete and final record of the original wall, including both reliefs and inscriptions? Our affirmative decision meant that we must scrap the work of the first two seasons and redraw the plates on a larger and more adequate scale which would make them paleographically, archaeologically, and artistically as final and complete a record of the entire original wall as human fallibility could reasonably expect to attain.

In accordance with this revised plan of procedure the staff of the expedition was increased after the end of the second season by the addition of two epigraphers and two artists. At the same time, by the generosity of Mr. Julius Rosenwald and of the General Education Board, the Institute was able to instal an Egyptological library (Fig. 3), now numbering 4,000 volumes, which was absolutely essential to the accurate progress of the work, and to attach a librarian to the staff. With this enlarged force and aided by the valuable experience of the first two seasons, the process of recording was once more begun. The interest and enthusiasm displayed by all concerned advanced the completion of the plates more rapidly than was expected, so that at the end of the fourth season, April 15, 1928, the material for the first volume of plates on the enlarged scale was ready for the press.

There are over 1,600 linear feet of historical reliefs, picture after picture, both outside and inside the temple, showing in minute detail the story of the Pharaoh's wars. Step after step, the successive campaigns are graphically ranged upon the walls, from the receipt of news reporting enemy activities on the frontier and the commissioning of the king by his god to undertake the defense of the realm (Fig. 9) through the actual march to battle, the triumph on the field, the return to the capital, and the Pharaoh's appearance before the supreme

god of the Empire to render account of his stewardship. These various series of reliefs form each a sort of cinema of the war; but it must be remembered in considering their historicity that the Pharaoh was



FIG. 9.—RAMSES III RECEIVES FROM AMON-RE A SWORD WITH THE COMMISSION TO UNDERTAKE THE FIRST LIBYAN WAR.

The supreme god (at right), enthroned within his shrine and attended by his son Chonsu, the moon god, receives his royal son Ramses, who is followed by Thoth, the herald of the gods. The inscription directly before the knees of Amon reads: "Take thou the sword, my son, my beloved, that thou mayest smite the heads of the rebellious countries." This scene probably represents some ceremony which actually took place in the great temple of Amon at Karnak, wherein a divine oracle was delivered, commanding the undertaking of the war. By the time of Ramses III's reign many, if not most, of such important decisions were reached only with the expressed approval of the god.

actor, producer, and censor all in one. They are plainly a partisan presentation ascribing all the glory to the royal prowess and depriving the enemy of even as much spirit as would in modern days be considered necessary to make a victory seem worth the trouble of recording.

While these records are partisan, they yet contain a vast mass of material which the historian can use with discrimination. There is here a great quantity of priceless wheat, which it is not difficult to sift from the chaff. The main facts of the wars and of the movements of northern peoples which made the wars necessary are there. Details of strategy, diplomatic activity preceding or following the wars, the final



FIG. 10.—TWO SHACKLED PRISONERS CAPTURED BY THE EGYPTIANS FROM THE CREWS OF THE NORTHERN RAIDERS.

The effort of the Egyptian artist to bring out in their faces racial characteristics is plainly apparent, in contrast with the placid features of the two Egyptian warriors standing in front of them. The two captives are possibly Sherden, though more probably they belong to one of the other northern hordes which menaced the Empire during Ramses III's reign.

settlement of the difficulties—these are lacking from the record. Though the various scenes depicted may be highly colored to produce the impression that the successes claimed were due almost entirely to the Pharaoh in person, still the incidental details which form the background of the picture are drawn from the actual experience of the artists or of those who guided the artists' work. These wall pictures, disclosing to us costume, equipment, weapons, methods of warfare, racial characteristics (Fig. 10), and military organization, are a revela-

tion of ancient life from all sides of the eastern Mediterranean, and especially from Southeastern Europe. The Egyptian artist's rendering of such details would not be distorted by racial prejudice, national pride, or pharaonic vanity, and is without doubt reliable. As works of art, moreover, the reliefs are an unexpected revelation, for they possess far greater artistic merit than has formerly been ascribed to them (Fig. 11).

The inscriptions which accompany the reliefs are also a mine of philological riches, though the verbose style and the straining after effect which characterize them often obscure the modicum of fact they contain (Fig. 12). The chief aim of the author or authors of the inscriptions was not to narrate history but to laud the monarch in the most approved style of the time. They bear much the same relation to the more sober narratives of the Eighteenth Dynasty that the late Silver Latin does to the writings of the great days of Roman literature. On the other hand, in dealing with any literature of so remote a period as the reign of Ramses III we must remember that what has survived probably represents only a small residue of what was actually written about the events recorded, and that what has perished may have been far more informative and far freer from defects of style, as judged by classical standards, than what has remained would indicate. Ramses III too will have had his military scribes who accompanied the Pharaoh on his campaigns and recorded the events of each day as did those of Thutmose III. But like Thutmose III's roll of leather with its straightforward narrative, Ramses III's annals may have been written only to perish, leaving us merely the poetic rhapsodies of some court laureate more interested in securing the approval of his master than in telling the true story of his wars.

Besides many miscellaneous but still uncompleted copies and notes made by the expedition, its *completed* work now comprises the records of three campaigns: first, a *razzia* into Nubia, occupying three scenes; second, the first campaign against the Libyans, filling six scenes on the outer wall of the temple and four scenes in the second court, besides a long inscription of seventy-five lines in the same court; third, the war against the northern peoples, made up of eight scenes and one long inscription of thirty-eight lines, of which some are on the



FIG. 11.—RAMSES III SETS OUT UPON HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LIBYANS

The king is shown, in the attitude of some hero on a Greek vase painting, in the act of mounting his chariot. Behind him are troops from whom the monarch has just turned. These are just rising from a deep obeisance, while the men before him are bowing down in reverence. At the horses' heads is a fine figure of a groom grasping the reins in one hand and reaching up with the other to stroke the muzzles of the restive animals.

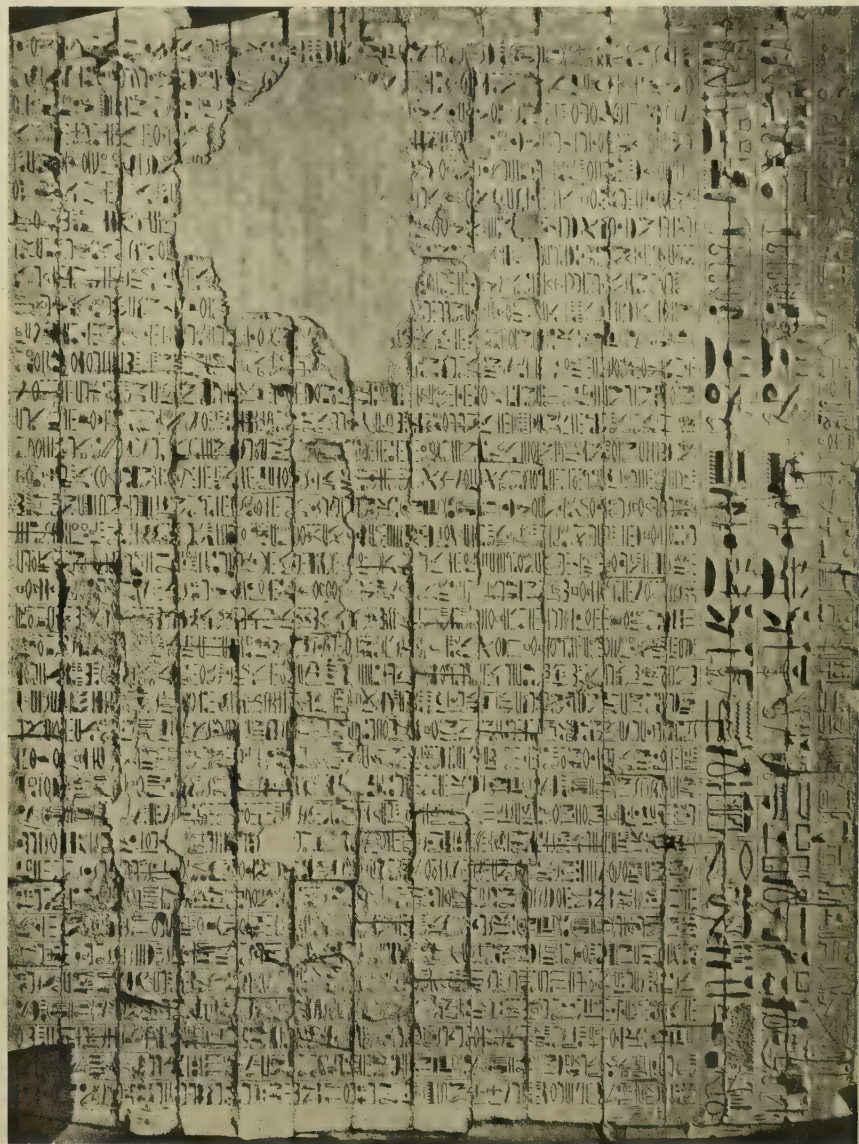


FIG. 12.—THE GREAT INSCRIPTION OF YEAR EIGHT

This long text from the first court of the temple contains our chief account of the attack upon the Egyptian frontiers made by the northern invaders during Ramses III's reign. For the period it is well carved, a good piece of hieroglyphic cutting. The style of the author is florid and full of exaggerated metaphors. The historical portion occupies only about one-third of the whole, the remainder being laudation of the king's prowess and of his benefac-

outer wall and some within the first court. These twenty-one vast relief scenes and two enormously long inscriptions occupy altogether over thirty-five plates now completed, two of which are in color. In addition, a considerable number of plates belonging to the next volume have been either partly or wholly prepared. Along with the preparation of the plates has gone the writing of a textual commentary as well as a commentary on the reliefs, both of which are well advanced and, it is hoped, will appear shortly after the volume of plates.

Of this material, the six scenes from the west wall of the temple, being the three of the Nubian war and the first three from the war with the Libyans, have never been previously published. A number of the remaining scenes have been published either in photographic reproductions or in line drawings. Of the latter, practically all are the work of the great recording expeditions of the early and middle part of the nineteenth century. In view of these earlier publications, the question may be raised why republication should be necessary. The experience of the expedition during its work at Medinet Habu has amply justified the republishing of this material. Even the excellent photographs contained in some of the latest publications, while they render very successfully the plastic effect of the original, suffer from limitations inherent in photography. A photograph is an incomplete and often misleading record of an ancient sculptured document, both because it shows any given wall with all the injuries that time and vandalism have inflicted, and especially because it unavoidably shows the wall as seen under only one lighting. At the same time it is seen from only one point of view, and that a distant one. Many of the details observable by the trained eye will be found on careful study of the original either to have escaped the camera altogether or to have been rendered only half intelligibly. The older line drawings, on the other hand, while they are remarkable achievements for their time, would no longer be considered at all adequate according to modern standards of accuracy and completeness. The early draftsmen overlooked or misunderstood an extraordinary amount of interesting detail and often misinterpreted what they included, so that they are everywhere very misleading.

In the drawings embodying the work of the Epigraphic Expedition the first object has been accuracy, the second, inclusiveness, or as

near an approach as possible to completeness. Any line drawing must of necessity fail to give the plastic effect of the carving and is therefore only a partial record of the sculptor's art. It can at most give a faithful picture of the composition. But on the other hand, within this limitation it can give the design without the accidental distractions



FIG. 13.—A BATTLEFIELD COVERED WITH DEAD AND DYING LIBYANS

It must be remembered that, in depicting such a scene, Egyptian artistic convention required the beholder to look down upon the surface of the field at the prostrate enemy and at the same time to look across the field at those still standing. Some of the Libyans depicted here are lying on the ground, while others are standing. The color with which this relief was covered is well preserved in the original, but is of course lost in the photograph.

occasioned by the many injuries to the wall, and it can include much which the camera records either obscurely or not at all (Figs. 13 and 14). It can bring to bear upon the reproduction not only the mechanical accuracy of the camera but also the trained eye of the artist, in turn checked and guided by the special knowledge of the Egyptologist. All of the drawings completed at the end of last season were thus gone over again and again, every square inch of the wall being carefully scrutinized and the drawings collated with it repeatedly.

One point which is perhaps frequently forgotten in dealing with these war reliefs is the fact that what has survived, even where the carving is well preserved, is only a part of the original record. All the reliefs were, when first completed, colored in minute detail. How minute this detail was is apparent only when a now colorless scene can



FIG. 14.—LINE DRAWING OF THE SAME SCENE AS THAT SHOWN PHOTOGRAPHICALLY IN FIGURE 13.

It is thus possible to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the photograph and the line drawing. While the plastic quality of the former is missing in the latter, the details of the composition are much clearer in the line drawing. The drawing contains some suggestion of the painted details also, such as the pools of blood between bodies and the flowers growing among the slain. The background is colored red to represent the desert land, while the outlines of a hill across which the enemy flee can be plainly discerned. The distractions arising from the injuries to the wall are less obtrusive in the drawing than in the photograph.

be compared with an approximately similar scene on which the coloring has been largely preserved. Fortunately at Medinet Habu a considerable number of reliefs still retain some part of their paint. On the outside of the north wall there is a relief depicting Ramses III in battle with the Libyans. As with all the reliefs thus exposed to sun and weather, no water colors such as Egyptian painters used for such work

could be expected to survive; merely the sculptured foundation of the design remains. In the second court, however, a wall protected by the roofed colonnade bears a similar scene from the same war. Here, in the upper portions of the relief, even the water-color paint is unusually well preserved, and we find that the bare sculpture has been extensively supplemented by painted details distinctly enriching the composition. The colors of the garments worn by the Libyans stand out clearly. Between the bodies of the slain as they lie upon the battle-field appear pools of blood. The painter has suggested the presence of the open country by painting in wild flowers which spring up among the dead. Moreover, it is apparent that the action takes place in a hilly region, for streams of blood run down between the bodies as the enemy attempt to escape across the hills from the Pharaoh's pursuing shafts. The details of the monarch's accouterments are indicated in color, relieving him of the almost naked appearance often presented by his sculptured figure when divested of its paint. It is not infrequent to find such details as bow strings or lance shafts partly carved and partly represented merely in paint. The characteristic tattoo marks on the bodies of the Libyans are also given in pigment only. When all these painted details have disappeared, though the sculptured design may remain in fairly good condition, much of the life of the original scene is gone and many aids to its interpretation are lost. The expedition is endeavoring, as far as possible, to make a complete record of all the color surviving in these important scenes.

Another point not always appreciated in dealing with these Medinet Habu reliefs is the extensive ancient use of plaster to cover up defects in the masonry and to eliminate lines or whole figures which, although already carved into the stone, were nevertheless expunged from the final composition. The surfaces of the temple walls, when the masons had done with them, presented many hollows or depressions where certain stones did not come out quite to the plane of their fellows. These hollows, as well as the interstices between the stones, were filled with plaster so as to present an even surface to the artists who were to adorn the building. This plaster, especially in the exposed portions of the wall, has for the most part fallen away, carrying with it practically all of the design once carved into or painted upon it. Though this method of work was slovenly, the result pro-

duced when the building was new was not, for the time being, unpleasant; but it has had disastrous effects on the permanency of the records.

Not only was plaster thus extensively used for covering up defects in the masonry, but, as suggested above, it constantly appears in a surprisingly large number of contemporary corrections both in the inscriptions and in the reliefs. It seems at times difficult to account for the original faulty drawings. Presumably there were in charge of the work one or more competent artists under whose eyes every composition on the wall must have passed. In order to divide up the wall into areas suitable for the scenes it was proposed to place upon them, someone must have apportioned the space and must have had before him at least sketches of the various reliefs to guide him in the work. In general, the different areas of relief fit in well together without overcrowding of the subjects within any one area. There is evident design, therefore, in the apportionment of space. But within any one scene there have been introduced many changes which would indicate either careless supervision or the absence of detailed copy furnished the ancient draftsmen by the master sculptor.

For instance, in several of the reliefs on the north wall between the two pylons there have been extensive alterations in the figures of the king's horses (Fig. 15) and also in some cases of the king himself. In most of these instances the original design shows the horses drawn in heavy and awkward lines, and revision was therefore plainly intended to remedy this defect. In such cases the method used for making the corrections was to cut deep rectangular holes along all very deeply cut lines to be eliminated, and also to roughen the surface of the shallower cuttings. When the whole was then covered with a new plaster surface, the deep holes served to hold this new plaster covering, especially in places where it was thickest. The revised design was then carved into the wall, where part of it was of course in the stone and part in the new plaster as the case might be.

All the plaster having later fallen off, the curious effect is sometimes presented of a horse with four hind legs, two of which had been originally covered with plaster. It is difficult to understand, however, except on the supposition of careless supervision, why these changes were not made in the *drawings* which must have been placed upon the wall to guide the sculptor in his work. That such sketches were made

before the carving was begun is clear from many places where the lines can still be seen along the edges of the figures.

The necessity for such corrections is still more difficult to understand in such instances as that where five plumes appear arising from the heads of two horses attached to the royal chariot. These five were



FIG. 15.—RAMSES III'S HORSES, SHOWING WHERE EXTENSIVE ALTERATIONS WERE MADE IN THE DRAWING OF THE ANIMALS.

The deep cuttings across the heavily recessed first outline of the horses' figures were made to hold in place the thick plaster with which these portions of the original figures of the animals were obliterated. The lighter lines appearing alongside these earlier lines represent the final stage of the work. As the plaster has fallen away, both the original and the corrected form of the animals may now be seen.

afterward changed to four, two for each horse. The change was not due to alteration in the form of the horses, but merely to mistake in the number made by the sculptor in the original design. There are even instances where alterations have been made in the forms of hieroglyphs without changing the identity of the hieroglyphs themselves (Fig. 16). In other words, the construction of Ramses III's



FIG. 16.—ANCIENT CORRECTIONS IN A SECTION OF THE LONG INSCRIPTION OF YEAR FIVE.

In the case of the bird at the left in each column, the form of the hieroglyph has been altered to improve its shape without changing the identity of the sign. Numerous modifications of this kind have been made in the inscriptions and reliefs at Medinet Habu.



FIG. 17.—A WARSHIP OF THE EGYPTIAN FLEET IN THE SCENE OF THE NAVAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NORTHERNERS

This ship is in the upper left-hand corner of the scene. The ship and its crew have undergone extensive alterations at the hand of the ancient master. The photograph shows the confused character of the sculpture as it now appears on the wall—a confusion much increased by its damaged condition. A comparison of this photograph of the original work of the artist with the next cut, giving the same subject in line drawing, will illustrate the gain in clarity of the drawing at the sacrifice of the plastic impression conveyed by the photograph. The figure of the Egyptian at the bow of the boat, framed against his shield, is one of the most pleasing in the whole relief.



FIG. 18.—THE EGYPTIAN WARSHIP SHOWN IN THE PRECEDING PHOTOGRAPH REPRODUCED IN LINE DRAWING

As explained in the text on page 30, there appear among the completed figures a considerable number of lines which are all that remain of the revised rendering of this scene. The other parts of the composition as corrected have fallen away with the plaster with which the first draft, later rejected, was covered. As the design appears at present, the first version, which was almost totally obliterated when the artist finished his revision, is now the dominant one, while only remnants survive of the master's final, corrected conception.

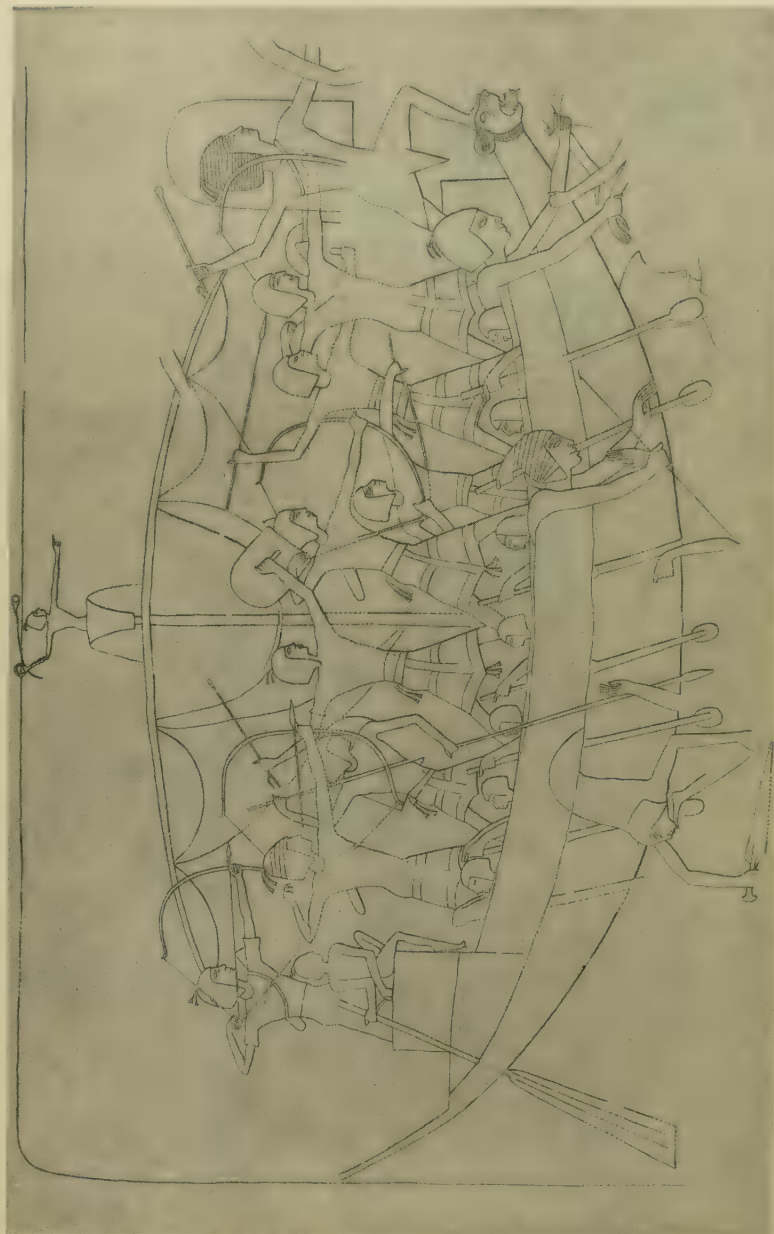


FIG. 19.—THE EGYPTIAN WARSHIP OF FIGURE 17, SHOWING ONLY THAT PORTION OF THE COMPOSITION WHICH SEEMS TO BELONG TO THE FIRST DRAFT.

This shows the work which, doubtless at the instigation of some superior official artist, was rejected in favor of the more animated posing of the figures as shown in the next illustration. At the bottom of the boat and arising from the water at the line of the keel, note a hand which some drowning enemy, whose body is submerged beneath the surface, has thrust despairingly upward in a vain effort to grasp the side of the boat. This is an almost unique example of such suggestion of the unseen in Egyptian art and would alone mark the author of the scene as a man of original genius. As, however, the painted element of the design is entirely gone, we cannot be sure how far the present state of the composition represents the final state



FIG. 20.—THE EGYPTIAN WARSHIP OF FIGURE 17, BUT SHOWING ONLY THOSE LINES WHICH CAN WITH REASONABLE CERTAINTY BE ASCRIBED TO THE SECOND OR REVISED DRAFT.

The carving still surviving on the wall is represented in solid lines, while the partially completed figures are filled out in dotted lines. Enough of this second and final draft remains to enable us to complete the outline with considerable confidence. It can at once be seen that the composition has gained greatly in life and energy. It is distinctly more suggestive of eagerness for battle than is the preceding illustration. The small figure of a man pulling on a line attached to grappling hooks thrown into an enemy sail (Fig. 24), which appears in the first version, surprisingly does not seem to belong also to the final version. In his stead appears a still smaller man with upraised arms, engaged in some act the nature of which is uncertain.

mortuary temple was either hasty or it was carelessly supervised. There are also numerous alterations in minor details of the building plan. Some portions of the reliefs contain more corrections than others, as though inferior workmen were employed there as compared with those used elsewhere in the building.

Perhaps the most interesting example of changes due to the desire to improve the artistic effect is to be seen in the case of one of the boats in the naval engagement with the northerners depicted on the north wall of the temple (Fig. 17). The Egyptian ship in the upper left-hand corner of the scene presents, as it stands today, a confused mass of lines among which careful study can disengage the original design as it was completed by the ancient artist. Among the figures of the Egyptian crew appear suggestions of other figures only partly outlined—a leg here, an arm there, a portion of a head elsewhere. It is apparent that for some definite reason the whole composition has been radically altered (Fig. 18). If the completed figures are isolated from the incomplete ones, it is seen that they form a consistent whole, fairly pleasing in effect but less vigorous in action than some other groups (Fig. 19). If these figures, plainly belonging to what we may call the first draft, are disregarded and the incomplete figures are filled out, the various disconnected parts being united by dotted lines, the second draft is discernible as the same general composition shown in the first draft; but the actors in the second, improved draft display greater animation of posture, and the whole gives the impression of greater power and movement and eagerness for the fray (Fig. 20).

Here it is clear that some artist, probably the master sculptor, decided that the original picture was lacking in vigor and could be improved, even though at the cost of considerable labor. Accordingly it would seem that the first carving was plastered over in so far as it could not be utilized in the revised composition. In fact, traces of this obliteration still appear in the form of patches of plaster in some of the cuttings. Then in the unplastered portions of the wall, and probably in the plaster itself, was cut the corrected version or second draft of the scene, and the changes were masked by a liberal use of paint. Both plaster and paint have long since disappeared, and there remains today only the first conception of the artist plus those portions of the final picture that were carved in the stone itself.

It is of importance to observe that here the first form of the scene was not rejected because it contained mistakes, such as the five plumes for the two horses, nor because the figures were distorted, as in the case of the Pharaoh's chariot horses already mentioned. The alterations could only have been made in the interests of better art, and our modern judgment would certainly approve of the change on that score. We must regard this change as evidence that there were still artists



FIG. 21.—FACE OF A SLAIN PHILISTINE

Shown in full front view as the corpse floats upon the surface of the sea amid the wreckage of the northern invaders' fleet. The closed eyes and peaceful face suggest sleep rather than violent death. Still it is a highly successful effort in an art which always as far as possible avoided showing in relief the full face.

at the court of Ramses III whose critical judgment was good. It is noticeable, however, that, although the figures in the other Egyptian boats closely resemble in their attitudes those in the rejected design of the first boat, no effort was made to extend the alterations to them. Perhaps it was concluded that the extent of the emendations necessary to revise the whole would be too great to be undertaken. At any rate, when the revision of the first ship was completed, the others were left as they had been.

The intensive study of the reliefs has brought to light a number of lesser details of considerable interest to the archaeologist. The representations of foreigners so abundant on the temple walls have long been the subject of attention on the part of scholars everywhere. There are many fine heads among them, full of an individuality lacking as a rule in the conventionalized faces of Egyptians. The artist has



FIG. 22.—A DEAD PHILISTINE FROM THE NAVAL BATTLE WITH THE NORTHERNERS.

The closed eyes and fallen jaw, suggestive of death, are a triumph of the sculptor's art. Note how the artist has brought the face near to the surface of the stone while he has sunk the back of the head much deeper into the wall, thus avoiding the heavy shadows in the face, which would otherwise obscure the features of his subject.

indicated not merely the accessory elements of dress and weapons incident to this or that foreign nation, but the variations in features, expression, profile, and other physical characteristics are clearly marked. The facial renderings are in some cases unprecedented in the history of art. They not only discriminate between the living and the dead, but there is an unmistakable effort to make the features express fear, anguish, or distress (Figs. 21 and 22). Another unprecedented psychological element is to be recognized in the upthrown

arm of a drowning man (below the ship in Figs. 17-20). Older Egyptian art always showed the entire human figure in such a case; but the ancient artist at Medinet Habu has understood the horror suggested by the despairing gesture of a drowning enemy engulfed by the sea

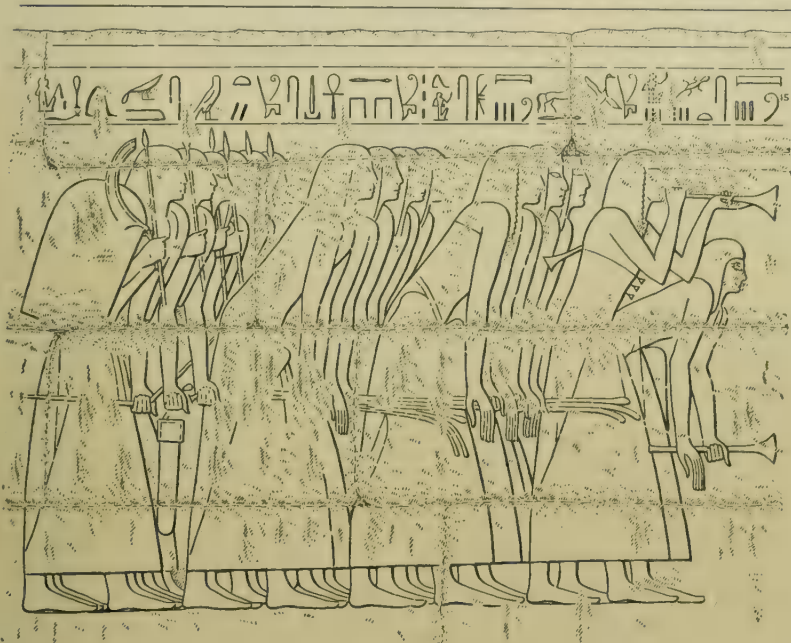


FIG. 23.—EGYPTIAN TRUMPETER BLOWING A SALUTE

From Figure 11, upper left-hand corner. The trumpet is of the same design as the two silver ones found in the tomb of Tutenkhamon. These still contained wooden forms inserted when a trumpet was not in use to prevent it from being bent or dented, as no process was then known of hardening the silver sufficiently to withstand the rough usage it inevitably received on a campaign. In the illustration here given the wooden form has been withdrawn from the instrument and is tucked under the trumpeter's arm. The instrument depicted above was probably also of silver.

and invisible except for his upthrown arm. While observations of detail by Egyptian artists have occasionally been noted by archaeologists before, these renditions of emotion disclosed by facial expression have hitherto escaped detection.

It is interesting to observe securely tucked under the trumpeter's

arm the wooden form which was always carried *within* the trumpet when the instrument was not in use, to prevent the soft silver from being dented (Fig. 23). The form has been removed to allow the trumpet to be blown. Just what this object carried under the arm might be was not apparent till such a wooden form was found still in place within the silver trumpet discovered in Tutenkhamon's



FIG. 25.—BRANDING OF PRISONERS TAKEN IN BATTLE

Two brandings are going on. In each case an Egyptian official seizes the wrist of a captured northern enemy and presses against his right shoulder a branding tool which presumably bears the royal name, showing that the one branded therewith is now a slave of the Pharaoh. Immediately in front of the group of four prisoners at the right stands a brazier of live coals from which protrude the handles of branding tools being heated. This is a unique illustration, hitherto unnoticed, of a practice otherwise known only from a literary reference in the Papyrus Harris.

tomb. Again, in the naval engagement with the northerners we see for the first time the grappling iron as an instrument of warfare. It is not there used to bind ship to ship to facilitate boarding an enemy vessel, but rather it is thrown into the enemy rigging either to tear the sail or to overturn the light craft of the foe (Fig. 24).

In another place we have a scene illustrative of a passage (77:5-6) in Papyrus Harris where the king speaks to his god about captives "branded, made into slaves, stamped with my name." The scene refer-

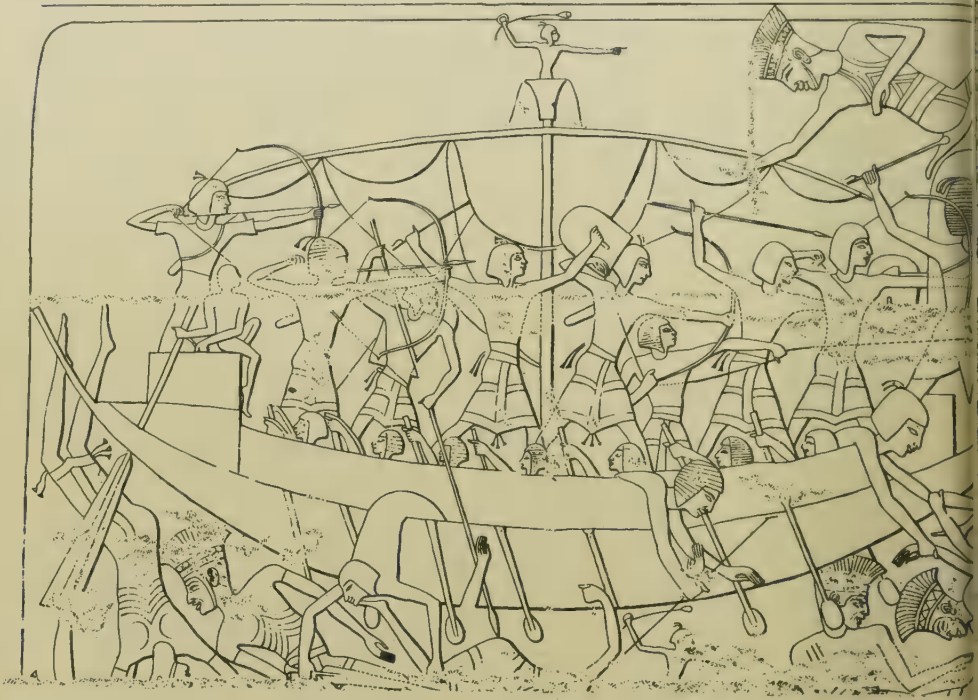


FIG. 24.—DETAIL FROM THE NAVAL BATTLE

One of the Egyptian vessels is engaged with an enemy ship. As usual in such scenes, the rope the other end of which terminates in a set of grappling hooks entangled in the enemy's sail. The irons were intended to tear the sail or disable the ship so as to render it helpless before the attack of the Egyptian vessels. If any of the figures of the enemy who now seem to be



EGYPTIANS AND THE NORTHERN PIRATES

ance but are completely overcome and helpless. In the Egyptian vessel stands a man holding a
ther instance of the use of this instrument elsewhere in the same relief, it would seem that the
e ship of the northerners is fitted with a ram, though no oars are shown. Had the painted details
y are in reality merely floating on the surface of the water.

red to shows Philistine captives led before the Pharaoh after the naval engagement. In front of his officers stands a brazier from which protrude the handles of branding tools. The Egyptians grasp the arm of each captive as he arrives and press the hot metal branding tool against



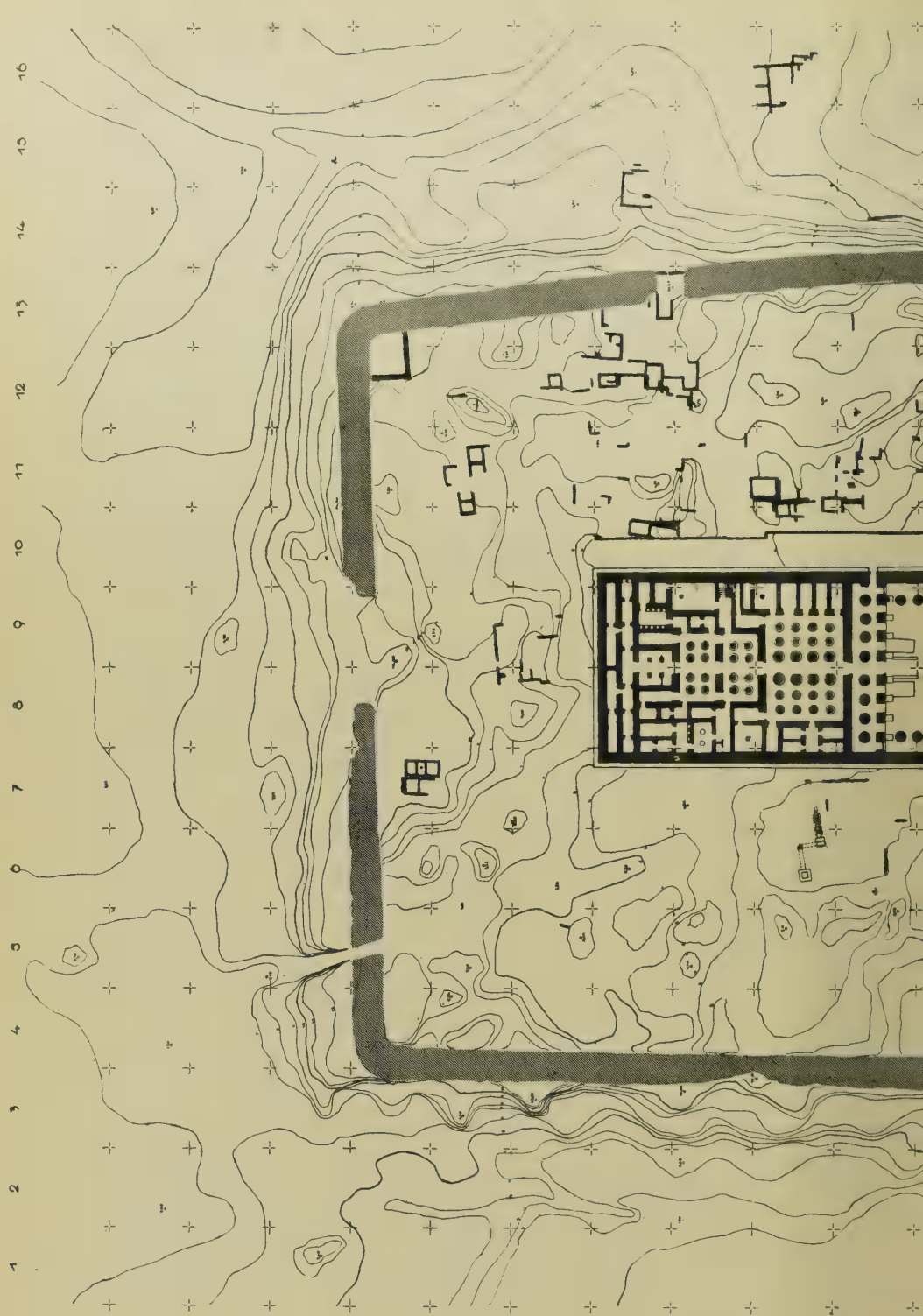
FIG. 26.—ORNAMENTED DISK FROM THE END OF THE PHARAOH'S CHARIOT POLE.

The decorative scene shows the king receiving a sword from the hand of some god who, to judge by his costume, must have been of foreign, probably Syrian, origin. The body of the disk is painted yellow to represent gold, the design being shown in red, possibly to indicate some sort of inlay. Such a disk, but with a different subject upon it, was found among the treasures of Tutenkhamon's tomb.

his right shoulder (Fig. 25). Elsewhere there is preserved the detail of the design that appears on the disk affixed to the end of the Pharaoh's chariot pole. It shows the king receiving a sword from a god whose dress strongly suggests some Syrian deity. This fits in well with the growing influence of Baal as a war god, following the foreign conquests of Egypt (Fig. 26).

All these and many other points, too numerous to mention here, have furnished constant surprises as the work of recording progressed. Taken together they form a considerable body of new material not observable in the old publications or not previously published at all. The vast mass of records at Medinet Habu contains a mine of information—historical, religious, archaeological, and artistic. With the help of every possible modern device it is the desire of the Oriental Institute to make these records available in reproductions as nearly accurate as human fallibility will permit, to be published as promptly as is compatible with the requisite accuracy.

X W V U T S R Q P O N



X W V U T S R Q P O N



FIG. 27.—GROUND PLAN OF MEDINET HABU AS DISCERNIBLE BEFORE BEGINNING THE EXCAVATIONS

In the area immediately south of the first court of the great temple this plan discloses the two columns, one at each side of the king's throne, which are shown more clearly in hall *F* in Figure 30. The south end of the first pylon, with the south wall and the south colonnade of the first court, will also be recognized on a larger scale in the black portions of Figures 29 and 30.

II

THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE AND PALACE OF MEDINET HABU (SEASON 1927-28)

By UVO HOELSCHER

After the epigraphic study and survey of Medinet Habu had reached an advanced stage, the Oriental Institute determined to supplement the exhaustive labors of the epigraphers and draftsmen with an architectural survey and investigation of the building for the purpose of merging the individual reliefs and inscriptions into an artistic and cultural *tout ensemble* of the entire temple.

In the winter of 1926-27, therefore, the survey of the great temple of Ramses III was begun. It gradually became more and more apparent, however, that unless those portions of the larger Ramessid precinct which adjoin the mortuary temple itself were included in the investigation, our architectural researches would remain a mere fragment. In other words, the entire great area implied in the name of Medinet Habu required excavation.

Certain isolated details had already long been known, as, for instance, the towered gateway¹ situated in the line of the fortress-like inclosure wall. This had served as a monumental entrance and at the same time contained in its interior certain rooms whose wall reliefs bear witness that the Pharaoh occasionally lingered here with the ladies of his harem. It was known, too, that just south of the temple there had stood a royal palace,² a fact confirmed by the excavations of Mr. Harry Burton in 1912, when he laid bare a few architectural features of the palace. But the nature and purpose of the extensive mud-brick structures which had filled the great inclosure of Medinet Habu remained unknown. Any conjectures to which one might incline were based largely on the Ramesseum, the mortuary temple of Ramses II, which had undoubtedly served as a model for Medinet Habu. Great vaulted storage magazines stretch along the sides and

¹ Hoelscher, *Das hohe Tor von Medinet Habu* (Leipzig, 1911).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 48 ff.

rear of the Ramesseum; but the entire foreground of the area is totally destroyed, so that its original plan will probably never be clearly understood. A few column bases and fragmentary walls south of the temple forecourt give evidence that here also once stood a palace.

In contrast with the Ramesseum, the preservation of Medinet Habu is better in that its area lies entirely above the inundation level of the Nile. Here, therefore, and here only, one might hope to arrive at a complete understanding of the original ground plan of a pharaonic mortuary temple with all its dependencies. This argued naturally for the complete clearance and systematic investigation of the entire Medinet Habu inclosure.

The first campaign of excavation began on October 18, 1927, and continued till April 10, 1928. The author was assisted in the conduct of the field work and in the draftsman's record by Messrs. DeLoach and Steckeweh, while the photography was done for the most part by Mr. Lind, the photographer of the Megiddo Expedition.

We began the excavation with a staff of eight Upper Egyptian foremen whom we took over from the Megiddo Expedition, the excavations of which cease during the winter season. To these were added about twenty other Upper Egyptians, also from the vicinity of Quft, who served as foremen and overseers. Most of them had, notwithstanding, to be trained for our special needs; but a few, and especially some of the very youngest, proved to be remarkably apt, so that by the end of our first campaign we found ourselves in command of a moderately reliable staff of foremen.

To the foregoing we then added labor from the neighboring villages, whose original quota of twenty grew finally to two hundred. They fell into groups of pickmen, who did the actual excavating; of boys, who carried the rubbish-filled baskets to the Decauville railway; and of youths, who pushed the dump cars.

The elevation of the surrounding terrain caused some difficulty in the disposal of the débris, necessitating long field-railway trackage and resulting in broad, low dumps. As a consequence we used virtually 500 meters of track and ten cars. When the work was in full swing, an average of one car per minute was pushed out from the excavation.

The territory of Medinet Habu, as we took it over from the Egyptian Antiquities Service in the autumn of 1927, is disclosed in the

accompanying plan (Fig. 27). It was covered for the most part with mounds of rubbish ranging in height from 3 to 6 meters, the remains of houses from the former Coptic town of Habu. Unfortunately, the entire area had until very recent times been thoroughly dug over by native peasants in their search for the nitrogenous refuse (*sebakh*) usually to be found on sites formerly inhabited by men and cattle and highly esteemed as a fertilizer. These natives had done their work so thoroughly that they had practically obliterated nearly all the mud brick walls, even to the bottoms of the foundation trenches. In the course of excavation, therefore, we found it necessary to proceed with the greatest conceivable care, safeguarding every vestige of wall still to be found *in situ*, in order to use it as a basis for a scientific reconstruction of the buildings.

The work¹ began on the south and southwest of the great temple. Here the massive inclosure wall was cleared not only within but to some extent on the outside also. The wall is more than 10 meters thick and was once, as one can gather from the towered gate, about 18 meters high. The corner of the wall is rounded both inside and out. A low, sloping curtain wall, also of mud brick, ran along in front of the higher wall. In later times this wall had frequently been strengthened, to some extent with material taken from the neighboring palace of Amenhotep III; for seals stamped on the mud bricks name the "House of Joy," as this palace was called. The warlike events which in the course of time were enacted in front of this wall are attested by numerous poisoned arrowheads of bone and flint which we found in the débris at its foot.

Between the great inclosure wall and the temple there extends a second or inner wall, 6 meters thick and fortified with towers. Its height, in reconstruction, would come to about 12 meters. In part a prolongation of the first pylon of the temple, it bends toward the rear to inclose the structures occupied by royalty, especially the palace which lies alongside the first court of the temple between the first and second pylons.

Outside the towered wall—that is, inclosed and dominated by the two sets of walls, outer and inner—lie in two parallel rows smaller

¹ An account of the still unfinished work in the Eighteenth Dynasty temple will be published in a later report.

dwellings and workshops. Here probably were housed the temple personnel and the slaves captured in war, whose offspring Ramses III reared here by ten thousands, as he himself tells us.

The chief interest of the year's excavation was centered in the royal palace (Fig. 28). At first glance its foundation walls appeared in a state of confusion difficult to comprehend, for here were foundation walls of two different palaces, one above the other. To the second palace belong the columns, the throne, and the thresholds which were exposed in 1912; and from them the floor level can be determined. The floor of the first palace, on the other hand, lay 40 centimeters lower. It was constructed of mud plaster laid over square mud tiles, and large portions of it are preserved.

One can see clearly that the first palace was razed when the building of the second palace began; for many of the stone blocks employed in the first palace were shifted to other uses in the second. They disclose the fact that both the first and the second palace were built by Ramses III, though separated by a considerable interval of time. For the first palace, including reliefs and paintings, was entirely finished before the decision was made to build a new one. The reason for the change is to be found in the dissimilarity between the ground plans of the two palaces (Figs. 29 and 30).

The first palace was planned and built simultaneously with the temple. Its plan is very simple: in front, an audience hall with twelve columns; behind this, a throne room with four columns. The two rooms communicated by a wide doorway, perhaps in three sections. The only access to this first palace was through the temple forecourt, whose great colonnaded portico served as the entrance hall of the palace (Fig. 31). Through two doors one gained entrance to two vestibules which led into the audience hall.

In the front wall of the audience hall (Room 2, Fig. 29) may be seen a flight of steps leading to a balcony window nearly 2 meters above the floor (Fig. 32). Here the Pharaoh, "like the sun in the horizon," made his appearance before the multitude assembled in the first court of the temple; and from this vantage point he beheld the captives and plunder being brought into the presence of the god. From this point, too, he amused himself in watching the gladiatorial com-



FIG. 28.—GENERAL VIEW OF THE PALACE

The view looks northwest from the southeast corner of the palace inclosure. Beyond the palace inclosure is the same building. Abutting on the back of this pylon we see the south wall of the first court of the temple, as shown in Figures 29 and 30. In the center of the palace the two columns of the throne room are clearly visible.



THE GREAT TEMPLE AT MEDINET HABU AFTER EXCAVATION

The long south wall of the great temple (see Fig. 27), and at the right stands the first pylon of the temple. It still contains its four doorways, which will be found like-
Further to the left are the remains of the baths (see Fig. 30).

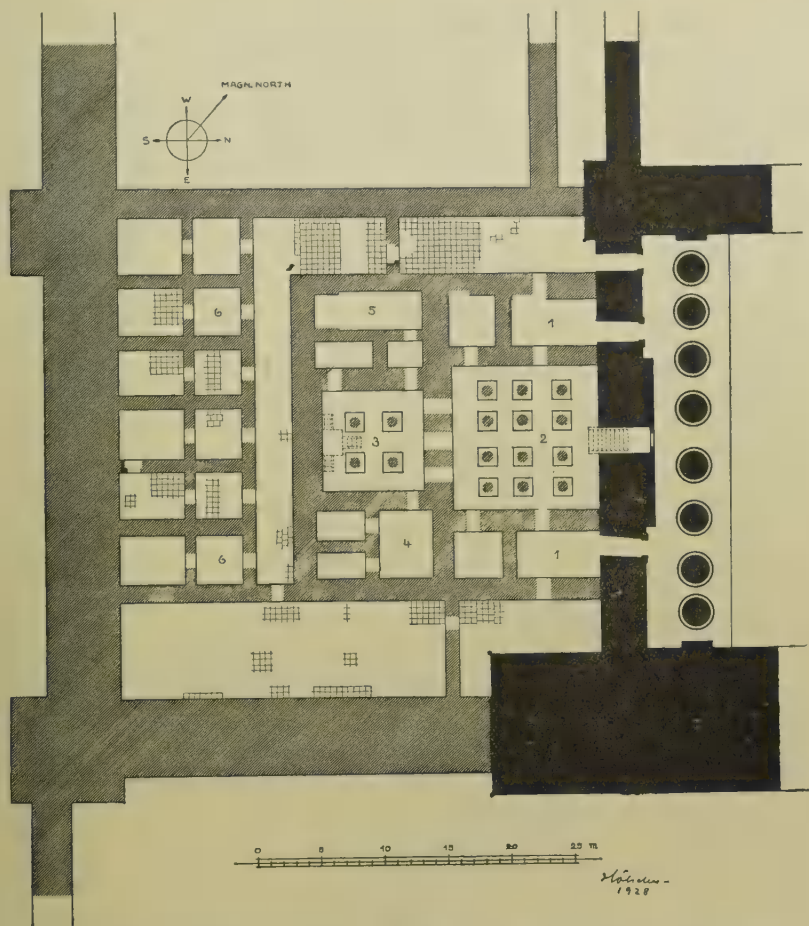


FIG. 29.—GROUND PLAN OF THE FIRST PALACE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU.

On the right the black portions are the stone masonry of the temple, with the south wall of the first court forming the front wall of the palace, while the south colonnade of the same court forms a portico in front of the palace. See elevation of this colonnade in Figure 31; its ground plan and the elevation of the wall behind it, that is, the front of the palace, in Figure 32; and finally the back of this front wall in Figure 33, showing the impinging brick walls of the palace structure, whose ground plan is shaded above.

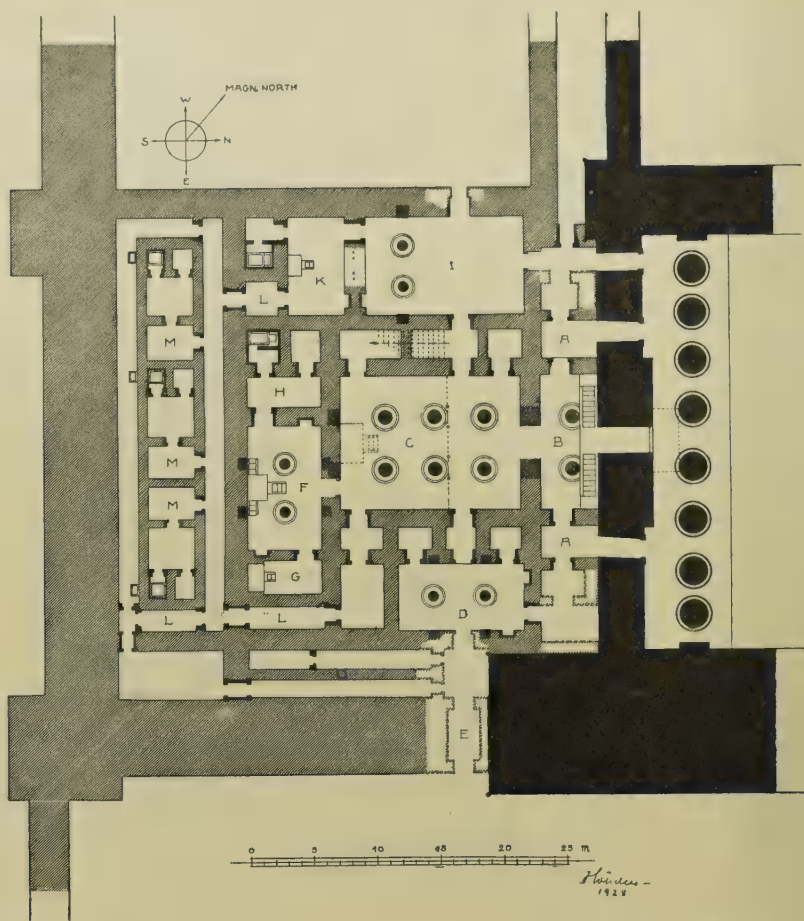


FIG. 30.—GROUND PLAN OF THE SECOND PALACE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU.

This plan covers the same area as Figure 29 and shows the same external walls of the palace, which were not altered, except that a side door was pierced through at *E* and another in the same axis on the opposite side. The other changes are discussed in the text, especially the apartments for the king and his ladies. For a transverse section see Figure 35.



FIG. 31.—COLONNADED HALL OR PORTICO FORMING THE FRONT OF THE PALACE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU

This elevation shows the colonnade as seen from the first court of the temple (cf. Fig. 27). On the left is the first pylon of the temple, and on the right is the second. A ground plan of this colonnade with an elevation of the wall behind it will be found in Figure 32.

bats which were carried on in the court and which may be seen vividly depicted in the relief scenes on the wall beneath the balcony window. It was from this balcony also that the Pharaoh would reward his faithful followers by tossing down to them chains of gold. We found such a scene depicted in a relief taken from the first palace and now

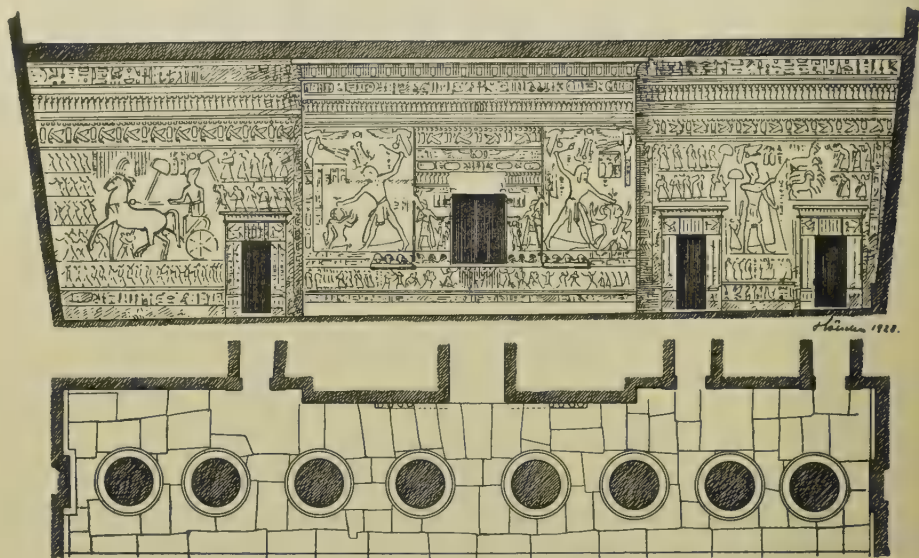


FIG. 32.—FRONT WALL OF THE PALACE (ABOVE) AND GROUND PLAN OF THE COLONNADE BEFORE IT (BELOW).

We see here in elevation the four doors in the front wall shown in ground plan in Figures 29 and 30. The painted sculptures embellishing the wall show a balanced disposition on both sides of the central door, before which was a wooden balcony no longer surviving. It was here that the king stood to inspect captives and spoils from his wars or to enjoy single combats arranged for his diversion. The reliefs at each side below the balcony depict these combats.

built into the flight of steps in the second structure—a scene precisely like those with which we are familiar in the tombs of Tell el-Amarna. We found also a number of blocks from the former throne base, on which appeared portrayals of bound captives, both Negroes and Semites.

To the left of the throne room (Room 3, Fig. 29) are three chambers which were probably storerooms; to the right is a bedroom (Room 5, Fig. 29) with a recess for the bed; and beside this are two small

adjoining rooms. A building to the rear contains storerooms and servants' quarters. It is quite clear that a palace with such limited living-quarters could hardly have served the Pharaoh as a place for a protracted stay, and it cannot therefore be regarded as his residential palace. Presumably it served merely for royal visits during the temple festivities and as a purely temporary stopping-place for the Pharaoh. The palace at the Ramesseum seems to have been laid out on exactly the same plan, and the formal rooms correspond exactly to those at Medinet Habu. The adjoining rooms may probably be reconstructed on the same plan. It would follow that the Ramesseum palace served as a model for the first palace at Medinet Habu.

In marked contrast is the plan of the second palace (Fig. 30). Its formal rooms follow a different plan, but are by no means larger than those of the first palace. Here we find a six-columned hall (*C*), against the rear wall of which must have stood a throne; and in front of this is a two-columned hall (*B*) in which a double flight of steps leads up to the balcony window. Small adjoining rooms served as storerooms and contained a stairway leading to the flat roof. Along a secondary axis passing at right angles through the main hall, one finds to the east a two-columned vestibule (*D*), beyond which is a gateway (*E*) cut through the towered wall that abuts on the first pylon. By this means one could leave the palace without traversing the temple court.

Behind the audience chambers follow the private rooms of the Pharaoh: a two-columned living-room (*F*) with an alabaster throne; a bedroom (*G*) with raised recess for the bed, to which one ascended by a small flight of steps; and a bath, toilet, and small dressing-room (*H*). Behind and to one side of the royal and audience chambers lies the harem. Westward from the six-columned hall, along the secondary axis of the palace one finds the harem court (*I*), which on its south side is bounded by a two-columned, shaded entrance hall. Behind this lies the women's salon (*K*), with what seems an alabaster dais for the Pharaoh's throne. A wide window, perhaps filled with a wooden grating, afforded an outlook into the court analogous to the view of the great temple court to be obtained from the Pharaoh's balcony window. Bath and toilet adjoin. From a vestibule (*L*), in which a eunuch was probably stationed, a second doorway leads to the women's apartments (*M*)—three exactly similar suites opening off a common

passage, each suite consisting of two rooms with bath and dressing-room. From the corridor before them there is direct communication on the one hand with the private apartments of the Pharaoh, while on the other a circuitous route leads to the side entrance of the palace. These exits also can be reached only through passages (*L*) guarded by eunuchs.¹

The second palace was, therefore, in a stricter sense a place of residence for the Pharaoh and his court than was the first. It cannot, however, be regarded as the Pharaoh's "residential palace." The latter, surely much larger and more luxurious, was probably situated somewhere in the Delta. Still the Pharaoh must occasionally have held court for somewhat lengthy periods in the palace at Medinet Habu.

The excavations having afforded us fairly full indications of the ground plans of the first and second palaces, we are now able to gain further disclosures by observation of the temple wall (cf. Fig. 28). Still perfectly preserved, it formed the front wall of the palace; and it shows so clearly the former points of contact where the brick palace walls and roof were built against it that the exact cross-sections of both the first and the second palace can be determined (Figs. 33-35).

Figure 34 shows a cross-section of the first palace through the two vaulted vestibules (Rooms 1, Fig. 29) and the twelve-columned audience hall (Room 2, Fig. 29). In the latter, one can recognize the supports rising on the former stone architraves and over them the outlines of the barrel-vaulted brick ceiling. We have thus disclosed to us a type of construction which has never hitherto been found in ancient Egypt: a colonnaded hall roofed with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. Furthermore, the situation affords us a good example of how the walls of such a palace were divided up and adorned with a decoration of wall pictures in colored relief.

Figure 35 shows the second palace, with its narrow, possibly two-storied side rooms and its high, spacious columned hall. Here also, the ceiling was carried by means of barrel vaults over stone architraves, but with this difference, that during the construction of the

¹ An alternative explanation of the harem area would be that *K* and its dependencies constituted the queen's throne room and living quarters, while the three less elaborate suites (*M*) were for the use of concubines.—EDITOR.



FIG. 33.—REAR ELEVATION OF THE FRONT WALL OF THE PALACE, SHOWING ALSO THE DISPOSITION OF THE BRICK WALLS AND ROOF OF THE FIRST PALACE AT THE POINTS OF CONTACT WITH THE STONE MASONRY FRONT WALL.

At the right is the first pylon, seen in Figure 28, and at the left the second pylon. Figure 28 shows also the four doors opening on the other side to the colonnaded portico and the first court of the temple (cf. Fig. 27). This stone masonry wall shows clear traces of the sun-dried brick palace structure which was built against it. Compare Figure 29 and especially the cross-section in Figure 34.

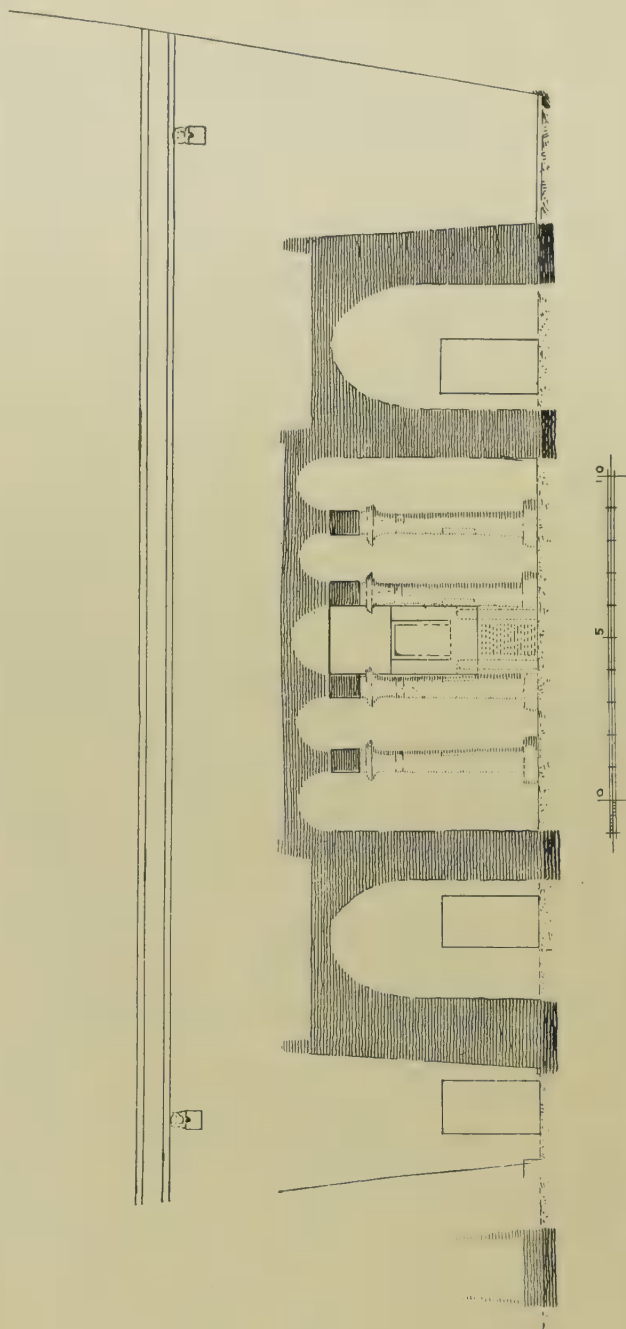


FIG. 34.—CROSS-SECTION THROUGH THE AUDIENCE HALL OF THE FIRST PALACE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU

The positions of the first pylon on the right and the second on the left are indicated. A comparison of the ground plan in Figure 29 will show the distribution of the bases of the columns, here shown in elevation, two on either side of a nave, forming two side aisles on each side. These columns were of stone.

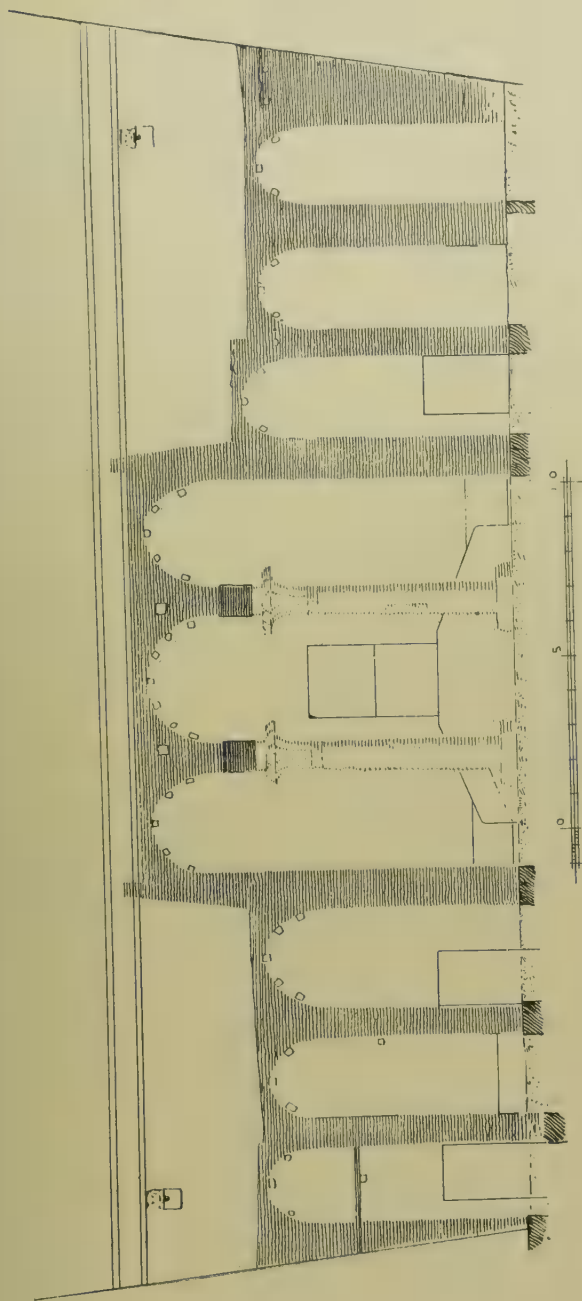


FIG. 35.—CROSS-SECTION THROUGH THE AUDIENCE HALL OF THE SECOND PALACE OF RAMSES III AT MEDINET HABU

A comparison with Figure 34 shows that the roof of the audience hall in the second palace is much higher than that of the first, resulting in a clerestory which was evidently fitted with windows for lighting the hall. Fragments of the openwork stone gratings which filled these windows were recovered during the excavations. Holes made in the stone masonry to carry the wooden beams of the temporary centering inserted to sustain the brick vaults of the ceiling while in course of erection are still visible in the front wall (Fig. 28) and are hence inserted in the drawing above. This reconstruction should be compared with the ground plan in Figure 30.

vaulting, a scaffolding or centering of wooden beams had here been inserted as a guide and support. This is again a new contribution to our knowledge of the ancient Egyptian builder's practice. This hall must have had high side windows. We found and pieced together quite a number of fragments from their elaborate stone grillwork. Various important fragments of columns and doorposts also were retrieved from a nearby tomb; so that it will probably be possible to reconstruct with some degree of certainty the essential portions of both palaces.

Next season's campaign will be largely concerned with ascertaining what originally stood in the court which borders the west side of the palace and is now filled with the débris of private dwellings of a later time, and with determining the connection between the palace or the harem and the rooms in the towered gateway so well known by their wall scenes of harem life.

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY *of* CHICAGO

MEDINET HABU STUDIES

1928/29

By

UVO HÖLSCHER

and

JOHN A. WILSON



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MEDINET HABU STUDIES
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I

THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

By UVO HÖLSCHER

II

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HISTORICAL
TEXTS COMMEMORATING
RAMSES III

By JOHN A. WILSON



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FOREWORD

This second preliminary report on the work of the Oriental Institute at Medinet Habu furnishes an even more convincing demonstration of the need for further study of this important site than could have been anticipated. Systematic clearance of the huge inclosure is steadily revealing the impressive architectural character of the great complex of temple, palace, dwellings, offices, and garden, all combined in a double fortress with enormous inner and outer walls. For the first time we see disclosed the detailed plan of a royal residence combined with a temple; and Dr. Hölscher's discerning eye has discovered also much of the palace superstructure which we had never dared hope to recover.

It is to be hoped that the friends of archaeological research, as well as professional archaeologists, will share our pleasure in seeing preserved the plans and the disposition of the rooms in the royal apartment. It is now possible for the modern visitor to walk through this palace of the twelfth century before the Christian Era, passing from reception hall to sleeping-rooms and baths, and to understand completely the arrangement of the entire palace. The sandstone doorposts, once prostrate and scattered at all angles among the débris of the palace, are now re-united to form doorways, each in its proper place and again connected by inclosing walls. The smaller modern bricks employed in the restoration work will, as Dr. Hölscher shows, preclude any confusion between old original construction still surviving and the restored portions. Now, for the first time, the formerly somber and confused ruins on the south side of the great Medinet Habu temple are intelligible to the visitor and very helpful to the archaeologist as well. These instructive results of the clearance on the east and south sides of the great inclosure suggest the possibility of even more important revelations when the less disturbed areas on the west and north have been cleared, for these latter regions are covered with much deeper accumulations than is any other part of the inclosure.

The written and sculptured documents on the walls of the great

temple, of which Dr. Wilson writes, are likewise substantially repaying the work the Institute is devoting to them. The first volume of a series of folios, in which the Institute is planning to issue a complete publication of the temples of Medinet Habu, will be devoted to the earlier historical records of Ramses III. It will contain fifty-four plates (two in color) with introductory text by Dr. Nelson. That volume, now on the press, should be available almost contemporaneously with this preliminary report.

JAMES HENRY BREASTED

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

February 22, 1930

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I

THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

By UVO HÖLSCHER

In our first campaign of excavation at Medinet Habu, during the season of 1927/28,¹ we had cleared within its huge rectangle a portion of the area which lay south of the great temple. In our second campaign (1928/29) we have excavated the adjacent southeastern portion. Although during the first season we had had only a site long since almost completely ransacked and ravaged, we found this time a tract in part undisturbed, so that it had preserved the records of the most diverse cultures in a more or less complete sequence. At the bottoms of various shafts sunk to the ground-water level, we kept coming upon heaped-up gravel with which were mingled numerous prehistoric potsherds. It looks as though we have here no artificial heaps piled up by human hands, but pebbles washed down by torrents along with potsherds of primitive cultures.

The oldest walls at Medinet Habu, as far as we see now, hardly antedate the beginning of the Empire, i.e., the middle of the second millennium B.C. In the newly excavated area to the southeast the foundations of strong walls made of mud bricks bearing the names of the kings Thutmose III and Thutmose IV give a definite clue. Again, to the northeast we had found during the previous year the inclosure walls of the well-known Eighteenth Dynasty temple. Their bricks are stamped with the cartouches of Queen Hatshepsut, the predecessor of Thutmose III. Only one single brick wall, unfortunately undated, is still older. Our previous investigations, then, indicate that the oldest demonstrable settlement on the site of Medinet Habu goes back to the time between the Middle Kingdom and the Empire, and that the small Eighteenth Dynasty temple (*F10* on the plan, Fig. 1) was its cultural center.

¹ See report in "Oriental Institute Communications" (hereafter abbreviated to *OIC*), No. 5.

Ramses III seems to have done away with this whole village when he had the "Hill of the Lord of Life" leveled for his great temple and palace. He allowed only the old Eighteenth Dynasty sanctuary to remain, and included it within his girdle wall. Since then it has looked out of place, because it lies at an oblique angle with reference to the axis of the Ramessid buildings.

Our most important task is naturally to acquaint ourselves thoroughly and accurately with Ramses III's imposing plan: the girdle wall with its fortified gate, the great temple of Amon, the royal palace, and all the other structures which belong to this enormous establishment. But the later strata likewise can on no account be neglected. For they too are individually of great significance in the history of culture and of art, and provide a valuable means of understanding the later development not only of Medinet Habu but of Egypt as a whole.

Here and there over the Ramessid building-remains lay undisturbed strata of rubbish, still 6-8 meters high, dating from about 1000 B.C. to the second millennium after Christ. From the depth of this accumulation we realize that the royal splendor at Medinet Habu did not last long. Soon after the death of Ramses III the powerful rectangular inclosure became a refuge for the population of the neighborhood. At that period the whole district became filled with wretched huts located hit or miss on narrow, crooked alleys like the modern *fellahin* villages. Among these inhabitants naturally were the priests of the great Ramessid temple. Their number and wealth had probably already dwindled considerably. The temple itself at this time apparently was little frequented by pious visitors, for it shows very few traces of later use and maintenance and almost no later alterations and additions. The Eighteenth Dynasty temple, on the other hand, seems to have resumed its importance as the center of local worship. In almost every century and from almost every dynasty down to the Roman period it received improvements, alterations, and additions, so that this temple might be called a history in stone.

The dead could, of course, scarcely be buried inside a town as densely built as was Medinet Habu. Only the great temple of Amon, with its desolate halls and silenced chambers, offered opportunity to conceal mummified bodies under its stone floor slabs. Similarly, the

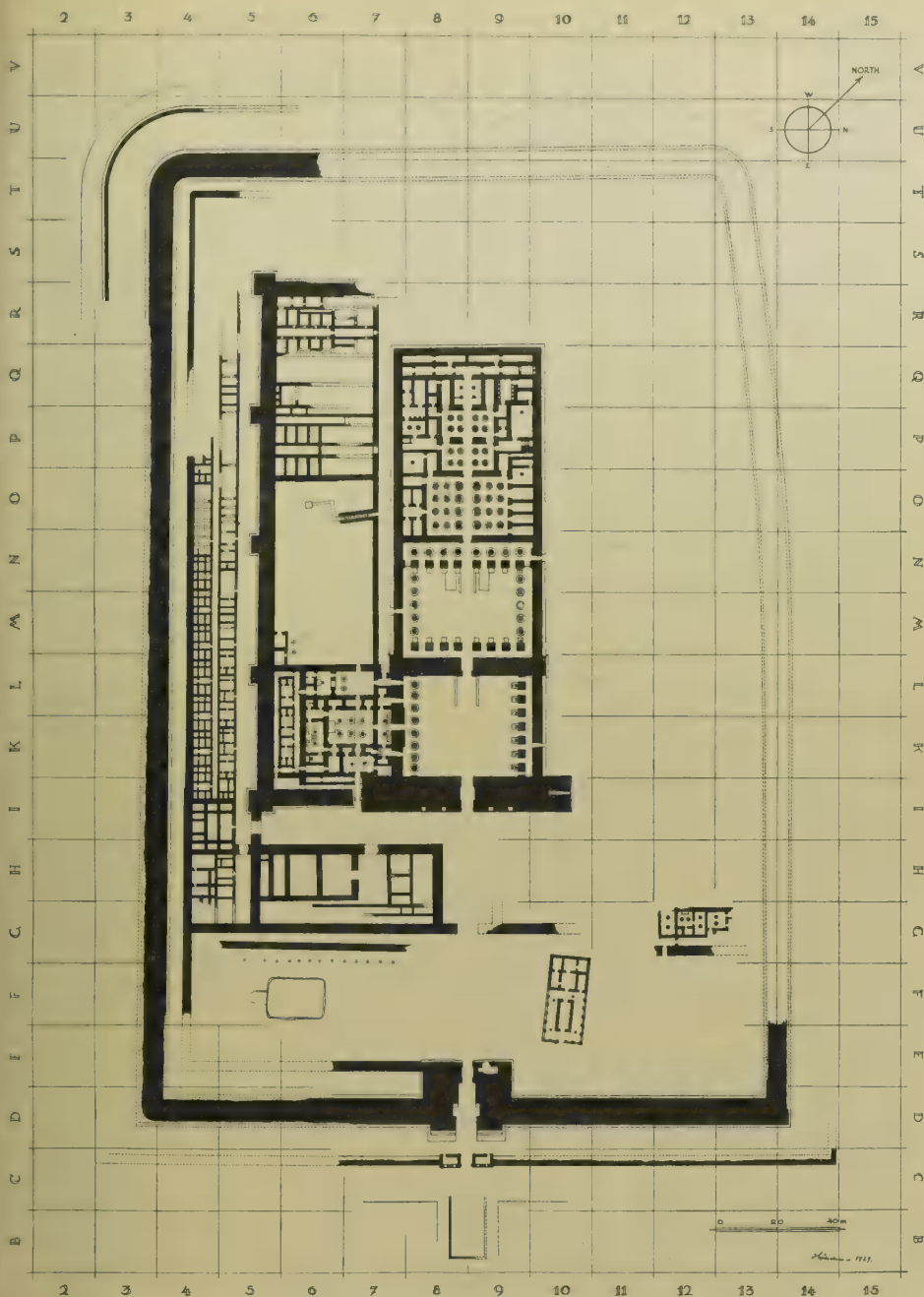


FIG. 1.—GROUND PLAN OF RAMSES III'S TEMPLE AND PALACE AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES

In the center is the large temple of Amon with its two forecourts. South of the first court is the royal palace. Compare the complete plan of Medinet Habu before excavation (*OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 27).

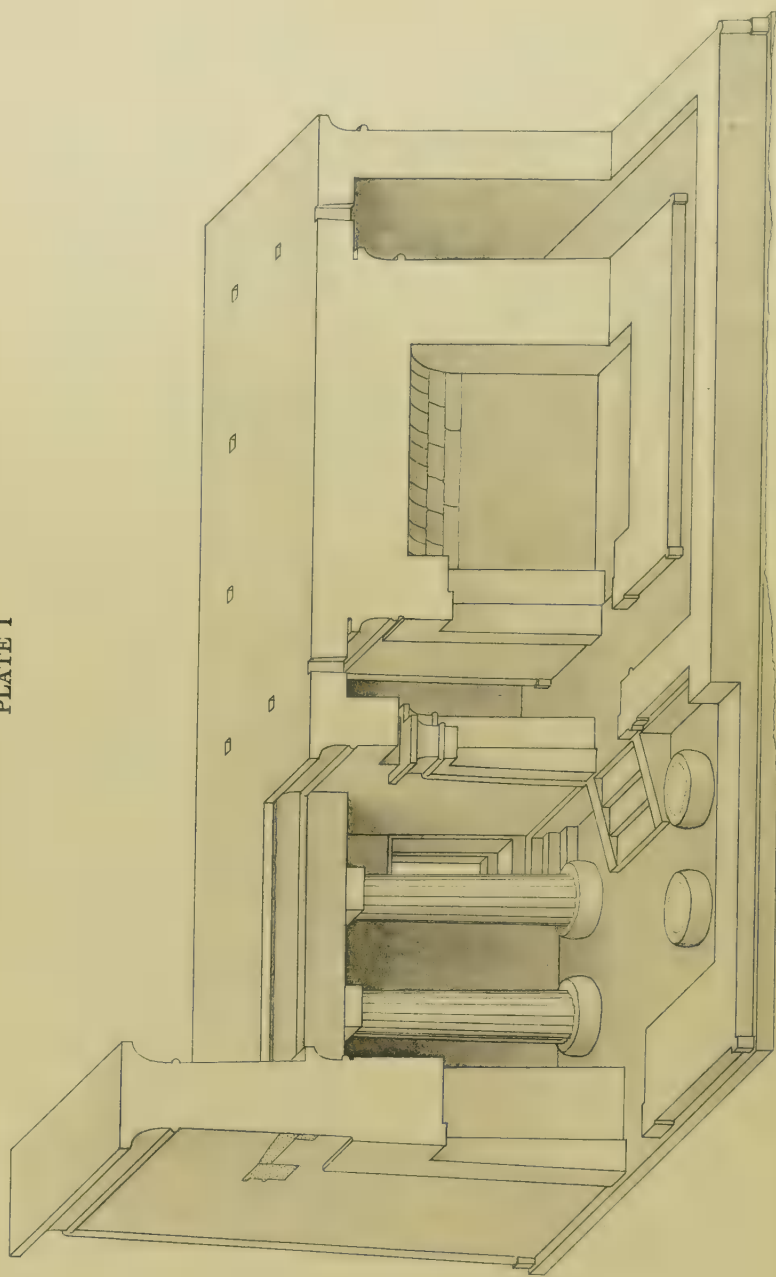
central avenue extending from the fortified gate to the temple was lined on both sides with tombs. In periods of general unrest these places inside the great walls of Medinet Habu may have been preferred for burial, since the lonely desert valleys or hillsides where the dead were ordinarily laid to rest had already become too insecure.

Already during our first season we had investigated some burials on the north side of the avenue. The most important, though unfortunately already sadly rifled, tomb belonged to a certain Harsiese who was a prince of Thebes about 850 B.C., probably under the Libyan Pharaoh Osorkon II. It was interesting to note that the granite sarcophagus in which he was laid bore the name, only superficially scratched out, of Hentmire, a sister and wife of the great Ramses II. It had evidently been stolen from the then already violated tomb of this queen, situated presumably in the near-by Valley of the Queens. Only the heavy lid was new; the original one had apparently been shattered by the tomb-robbers. So this tomb illustrates the fact, well enough known from the literature, that with the crumbling of Egyptian power after the Ramesid period the safety of even royal tombs in the lonely desert valleys could no longer be guaranteed.

On the south side of the central avenue lies a group of tombs which, together with the chapels above them, are still well preserved. These structures, of the seventh century B.C., belonged to members of the royal family, "god's-wives" and great priestesses of Amon. The best-preserved building belonged to Amenirdis I, sister of the Ethiopian Pharaoh Shabaka and mother-in-law of King Psamtik I. As a spiritual princess of Thebes, she played a well-known part in history. Adjoining are the chapels of Shepnupet II, daughter (by adoption) of the Ethiopian Piankhi; of Nitocris, daughter of Psamtik I; and lastly of Mehetnusekhet, mother of Nitocris and wife of Psamtik, who, although not a "god's-wife," was laid to rest beside her daughter.

These little temples of the time of Psamtik, that is, of the Saitic renaissance of Egyptian art, are excellent examples of such mortuary chapels. The reconstruction in Plate I should be supplemented by the reader's mental images of the wall reliefs in their original delicacy (Fig. 2). In their present state they show serious damage from fire and smoke. Similar chapels, destroyed, to be sure, except for the

PLATE I



Printed in Germany

THE MORTUARY CHAPEL OF AMENIRDIS AT MEDINET HABU

underground burial chambers, were found farther east toward the towered gateway.

Architecturally, all these chapels have been important for the additional reason that they displayed the oldest true arches in stone



FIG. 2.—WALL RELIEF IN THE MORTUARY CHAPEL OF THE "GOD'S-WIFE" AMENIRDIS (SEVENTH CENTURY B.C.)

Compare Plate I. This relief shows how the whole wall surface of this little temple was adorned.

yet known anywhere in the world. The best-preserved of these mortuary chapels had been excavated by the Egyptian Service des Antiquités several decades ago. Even their underground burial chambers had been opened and investigated—to be sure, only enough to determine that they had been plundered in antiquity and no longer concealed any burial remains. In connection with our systematic work we

have now opened, investigated, and surveyed these vaults anew. In the course of our work it became apparent that the pillaging had taken place already in ancient Egyptian times. The sarcophagus of Nitocris, for example, had been plundered and then re-used for a second burial in the not far distant valley of Deir el-Medineh, whence it was brought to the Cairo Museum in 1884. Her tomb furnishings, ushebtis, etc., worthless to the robbers, had been thrown aside near her tomb within the Medinet Habu inclosure, where we recovered them in part. The tomb of Amenirdis had shared the same fate. The heart scarab which had been placed with the mummy of this princess was found several years ago, presumably in the vicinity, by natives and was purchased by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. We found other items of her equipment in 1927/28 in the rubbish. This year (1928/29) we found, somewhat farther to the north, a portrait statue of this princess, apparently from the chapel of Shepnupet.

Numerous other finds and discoveries important for the history of art and culture are intentionally omitted from this report, so that we may confine ourselves to our main problem, the Ramessid building-complex.

The great wall which incloses the rectangular district of Medinet Habu (Fig. 1) was this year laid bare for a long stretch inside and here and there outside. The main brick wall, 10 meters thick, the auxiliary wall before it, and the dry ditch in front of the latter, are now clearly recognizable. Along the inside of the main wall stretches an elevated roadway supported by a sloping wall. This roadway once rose as a ramp along the great wall, so that it probably formed the approach to the ramparts.

The front part of the inclosed area was a park (*E-F 4-13* in Fig. 1). In its gravelly soil one can distinguish holes which were once filled with good black earth to receive the trees that were planted there in a long row. A pond or water hole (*F 5-6*) sunk to water-bearing strata supplied the water required for the grounds as well as drink for man and beast. In the north half of this park strip lay also the above-mentioned Eighteenth Dynasty temple.

A cross-wall bounded the park on the west (*G 4-13*). Behind it, in the southern half, lay a large structure surrounded by strong walls. Its large, seemingly unroofed spaces probably contained stables and

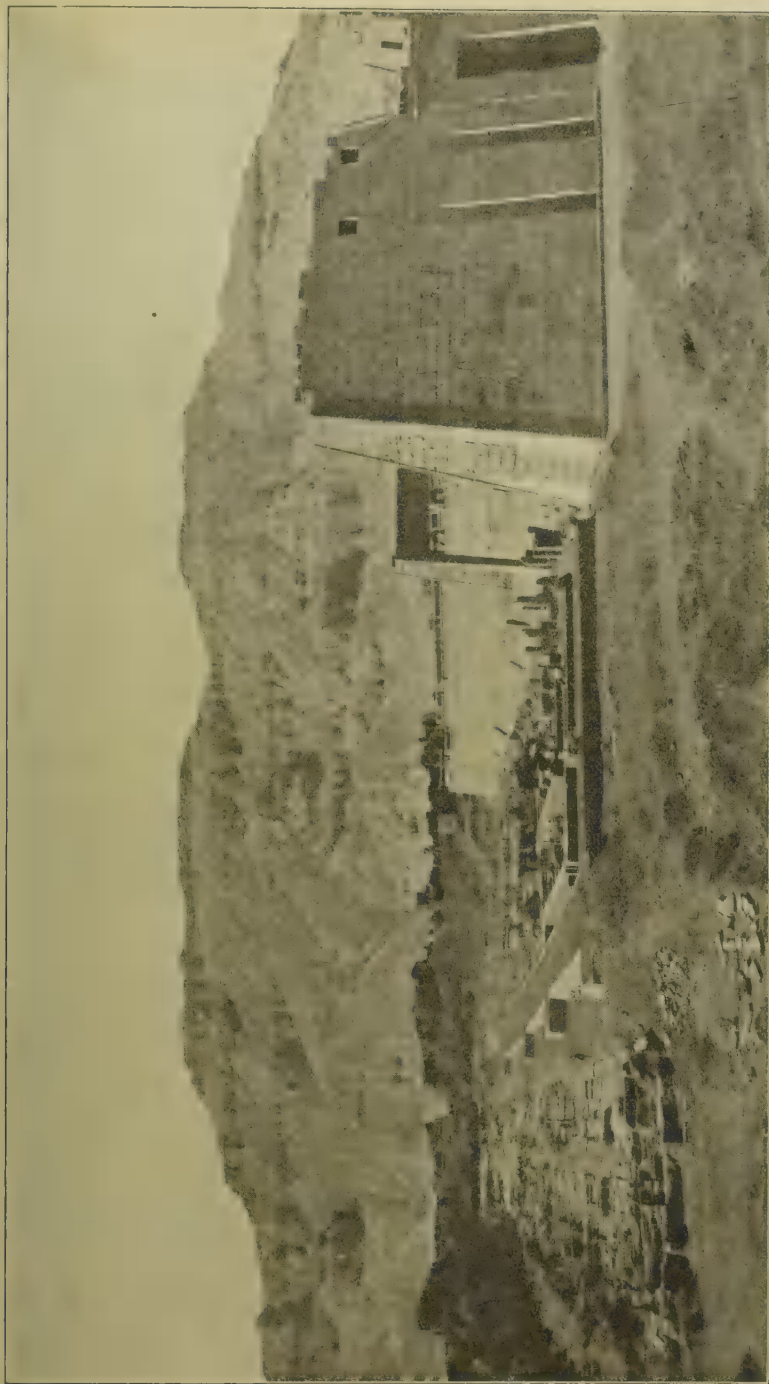


FIG. 3.—THE EXCAVATED AREA SOUTH OF THE GREAT TEMPLE

We are looking westward from the southeast corner of the great inclosure wall. At right is the great temple; at left and in the background the great brick wall which forms the outer inclosure of Medinet Habu. Between the two is the inner, tower-bordered inclosure wall which separates the royal structures (at right) from the dwellings and storehouses (at left). Compare the appearance a year earlier (*OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 28).

barnyards (*G-H 5-8*). Then came a broad roadway (*I 5-10*) stretching in front of and parallel with the first pylon of the temple.

Between the temple, the center of the whole complex, and the outer inclosure wall, stretches an inner fortification wall which was 6 meters thick, some 12 meters high, and bordered with towers. These towers (Fig. 3) stand about 40 meters apart (a distance suited to accurate and effective shooting of arrows) and probably overtopped the

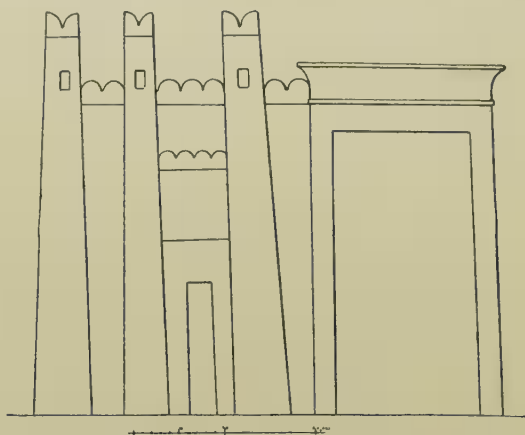


FIG. 4.—ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RENDERING OF A SANCTUARY SURROUNDED BY A TOWER-BORDERED WALL

This relief, dated to the period of Ramses III, in the Karnak temple of Khonsu, shows how the upper part of the tower-bordered wall at Medinet Habu (cf. Fig. 3) was constructed.

wall, as shown by a contemporary relief in the temple of Khonsu at Karnak (Fig. 4).

In the space, 25 meters wide, between the outer and the inner wall lie series of houses in two long rows. Our excavations of 1928/29 have shown that these were probably not workshops and dwellings for slaves captured in war,¹ but homes of officials or priests. The outer row consisted of narrow houses of more than one story; the houses of the inner row had only one story, but were correspondingly broader. Of the houses of more than one story, only the first story is preserved.

¹ A suggestion offered in *OIC*, No. 5, pp. 39-40.

This is the more to be regretted, since here for the first time in Egypt remains of such houses have been discovered.¹

The row of one-story houses (Fig. 5) is relatively easy to interpret. It shows how the humbler people lived in Ramessid times. The houses are of a new, elongated type. A doorway in the center leads into a small, open court with a colonnaded hall at its rear facing

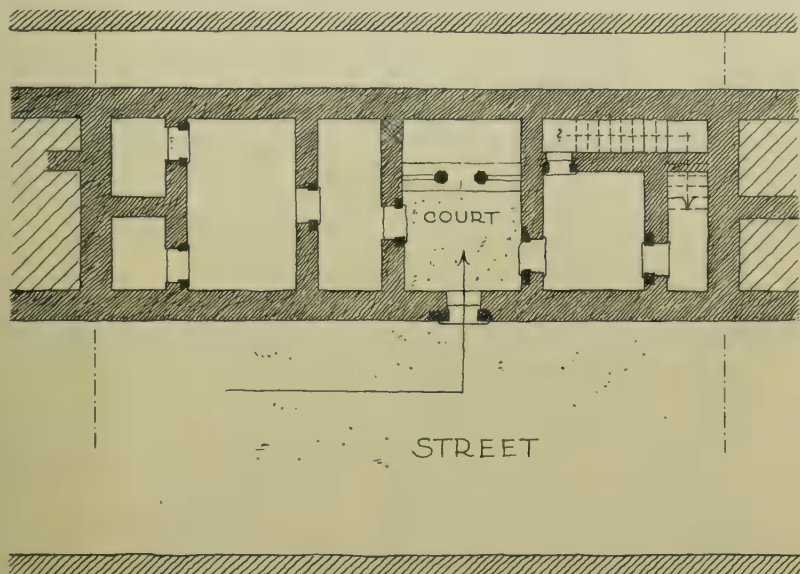


FIG. 5.—ONE OF THE HOUSES FOR OFFICIALS OR PRIESTS

Rows of such houses lie between the outer and the inner inclosure walls (cf. Fig. 1).

the north and thus providing a shady place to sit. The living-rooms proper adjoin at the left in the order already familiar to us from the royal harem.² At the right is another rather large room, which presumably served housekeeping needs. Behind it we must reconstruct

¹ For ancient Egyptian representations of such houses, see N. de G. Davies, "The Town House in Ancient Egypt," *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, Vol. I (1929), Part II.

² *OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 30.



FIG. 6.—RELIEF OVER THE RECESS IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE FIRST PALACE

This and other wrought stone blocks from Ramses III's first palace (cf. Fig. 7) were built into the foundations of his second palace. Note traces of the original coloring.

the stairway leading to the flat roof. Of the equipment of these dwellings, their poor state of preservation has left us very little—a few stone stools, fireplaces with jars and pots, etc.

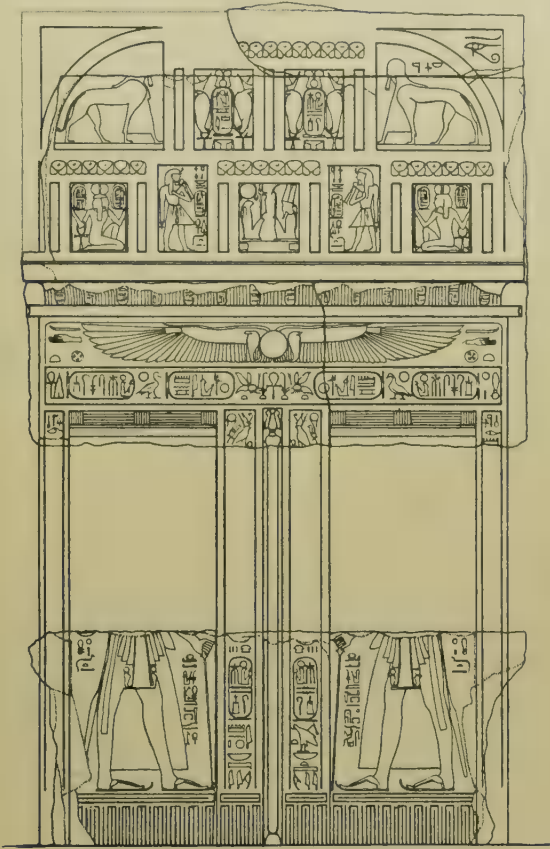


FIG. 7.—THE RECESS IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE FIRST PALACE

It stood behind the throne. It represents double doors through which the king was pictured as entering the throne room.

At the east end of the double row of houses, in the axis of the north-south roadway, stands a large house similar in ground plan to the adjoining houses of more than one story.

Inside the inner wall lie the royal structures and the great store-

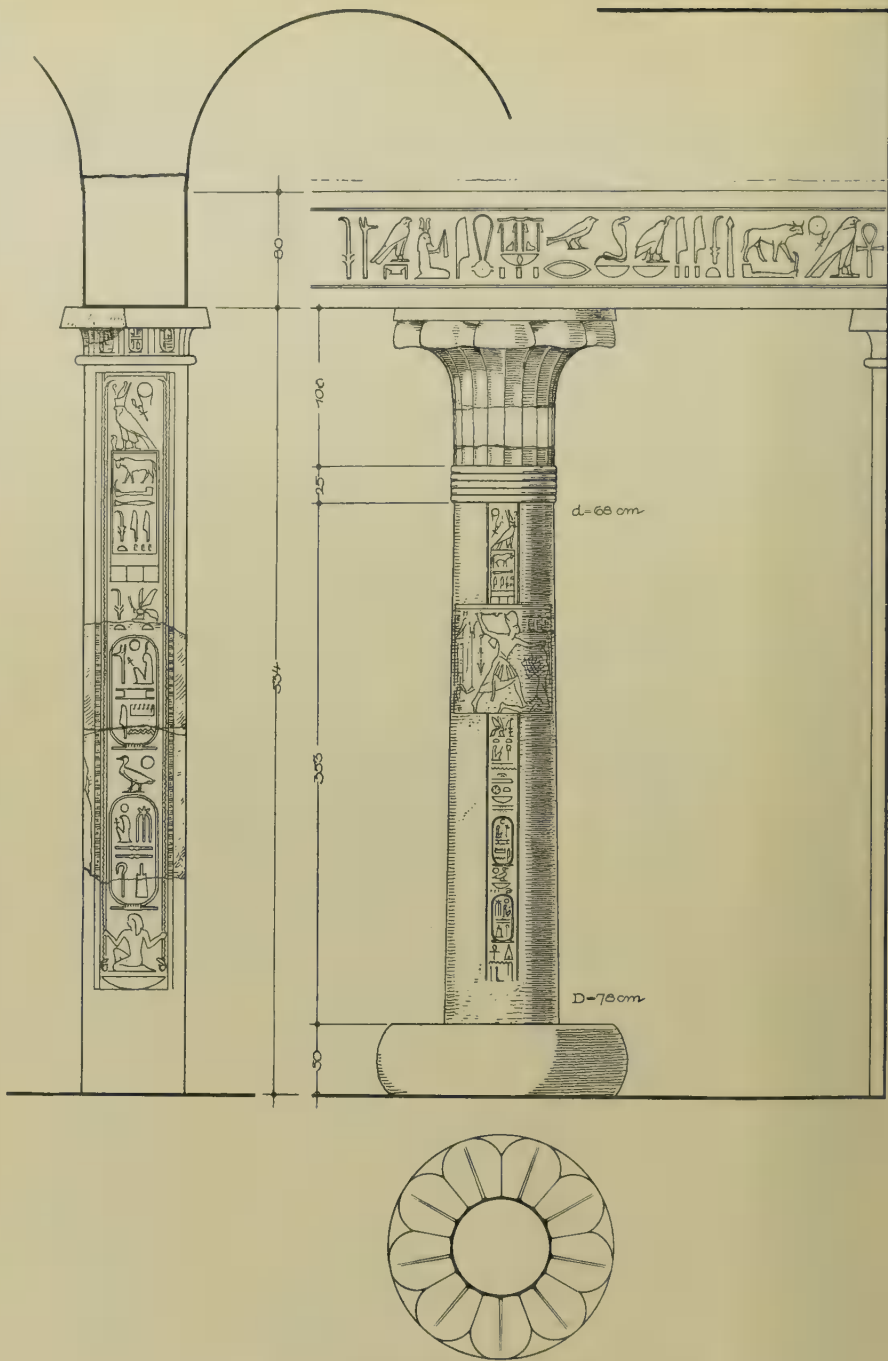


FIG. 8.—COLUMN AND PILASTER FROM THE FIRST PALACE

From a very heavy base rises the shaft of the column, inscribed and decorated and topped with a capital in the form of nine palm leaves. The pilaster, like the column, is of sandstone. It was built into the wall, which consists otherwise of mud bricks, in order to provide a firm support for the stone architraves.



FIG. 9.—HEADS OF BOUND PRISONERS OF WAR

These consoles were set beneath the balcony window of the first palace, on the side toward the temple court (cf. *OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 32). The various races of the enemy are distinctly recognizable.



FIG. 10.—A FALSE WINDOW PROBABLY BELONGING TO THE SECOND PALACE

Numerous fragments of real windows of similar style were also found.

houses of the temple. As we had already learned in 1927/28, Ramses III himself had torn down his first palace toward the end of his reign and replaced it by a second palace. The ground plans and elevations of both these palaces¹ were exhaustively re-examined in our second campaign. During the work a lucky chance restored to us the most essential architectural elements of the first palace. The great wrought blocks from this demolished first palace had been built into the foundations of the second palace and into other structures in the vicinity and could be recovered. They included columns, pilasters, architraves, parts of doorways, wall niches, and the base of the throne (Figs. 6-8). These pieces prove that our previous reconstructions were correct in their dimensions, and permit us now to sketch the principal rooms of the first palace with absolute certainty of all the details involved in their reconstruction (Plates II and III).

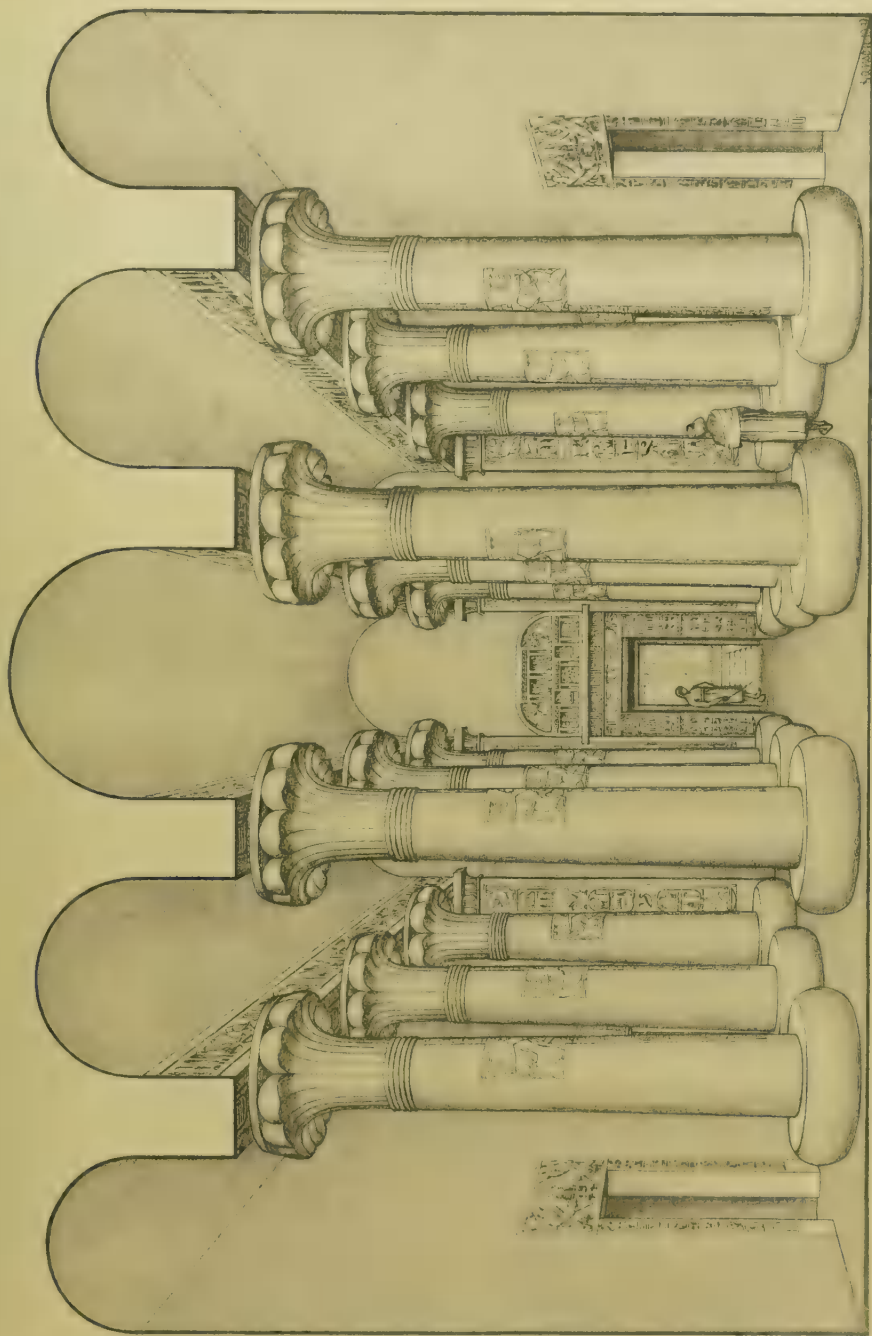
The twelve-columned audience hall is so filled with massive columns that only a section can adequately indicate its arrangement. To take in the room at a single glance was in reality quite impossible, for the profusion of close-set columns prevented the necessary breadth of vision. One could only walk about among the trunks of this dusky forest enjoying ever new vistas, just as in the hypostyle halls of the great temples. The walls and the barrel vaults were of mud brick. They are, therefore, irretrievably lost. But some idea of the brilliant paintings which once covered them can be derived from the front wall of the hall, since that wall, which forms at the same time part of the outside of the temple, was made of stone and is therefore well preserved.²

There are no traces of windows in this hall. There may have been narrow slits in the ceiling-vaults, such as occur in the stone ceilings of the chapel of Amenirdis (Plate I). But light entered the hall chiefly from the front, where steps led up to a high balcony window³ where the king was wont to make his appearance before the "great men, princes, and officers of the infantry and chariotry" gathered in the court below. At one time the opening toward the court was much narrower than it is now. Under it stretched a sculptured row of twenty-one prisoners' heads, projecting from the wall like consoles, so

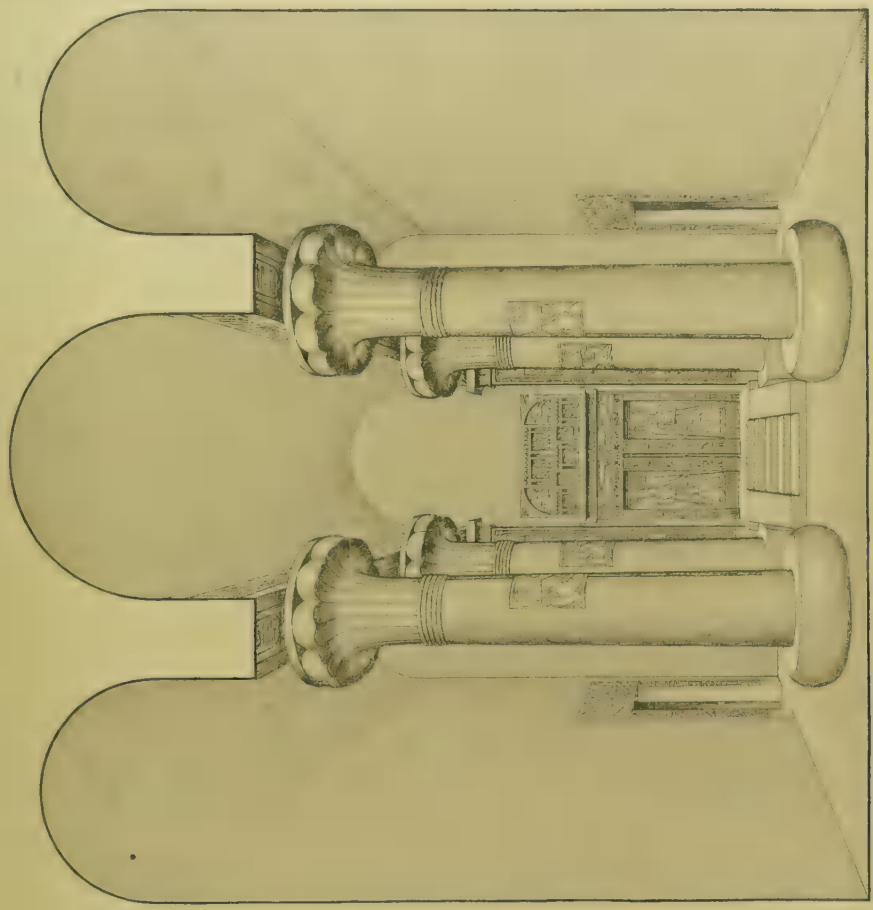
¹ *Ibid.*, Figs. 29-35.

² *Ibid.*, Fig. 33.

³ *Ibid.*, Fig. 32.



THE AUDIENCE HALL IN THE FIRST PALACE OF RAMSES III. RECONSTRUCTION



Printed in Germany

THE THRONE ROOM IN THE FIRST PALACE OF RAMSES III. RECONSTRUCTION

that when the king appeared at the window he seemed to stand upon these prisoners. In building the second palace, this balcony window was widened. In the process the seven prisoners' heads in the middle were knocked out and discarded. By a lucky chance we managed to find them (Fig. 9). These are much better preserved than the ones *in situ*. Both the plastic treatment and the coloring bring out clearly the



FIG. 11.—RE-ERECTION OF A FALLEN LINTEL IN THE HAREM

Compare the ground plan of the royal harem in *OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 30, and Figure 13 in this present report.

racial characteristics of the Negroes, Libyans, Semites, etc., represented.

Behind the audience hall with its twelve columns lay the smaller, four-columned throne room (Plate III), constructed in the same style as the former. The base of the throne had steps in front and was decorated on the sides with reliefs of bound prisoners. Behind it rose a richly framed recess such as is found in many temples, especially at Abydos. As shown by the reliefs, the recess represents double doors through which the king might be imagined as emerging from his pri-



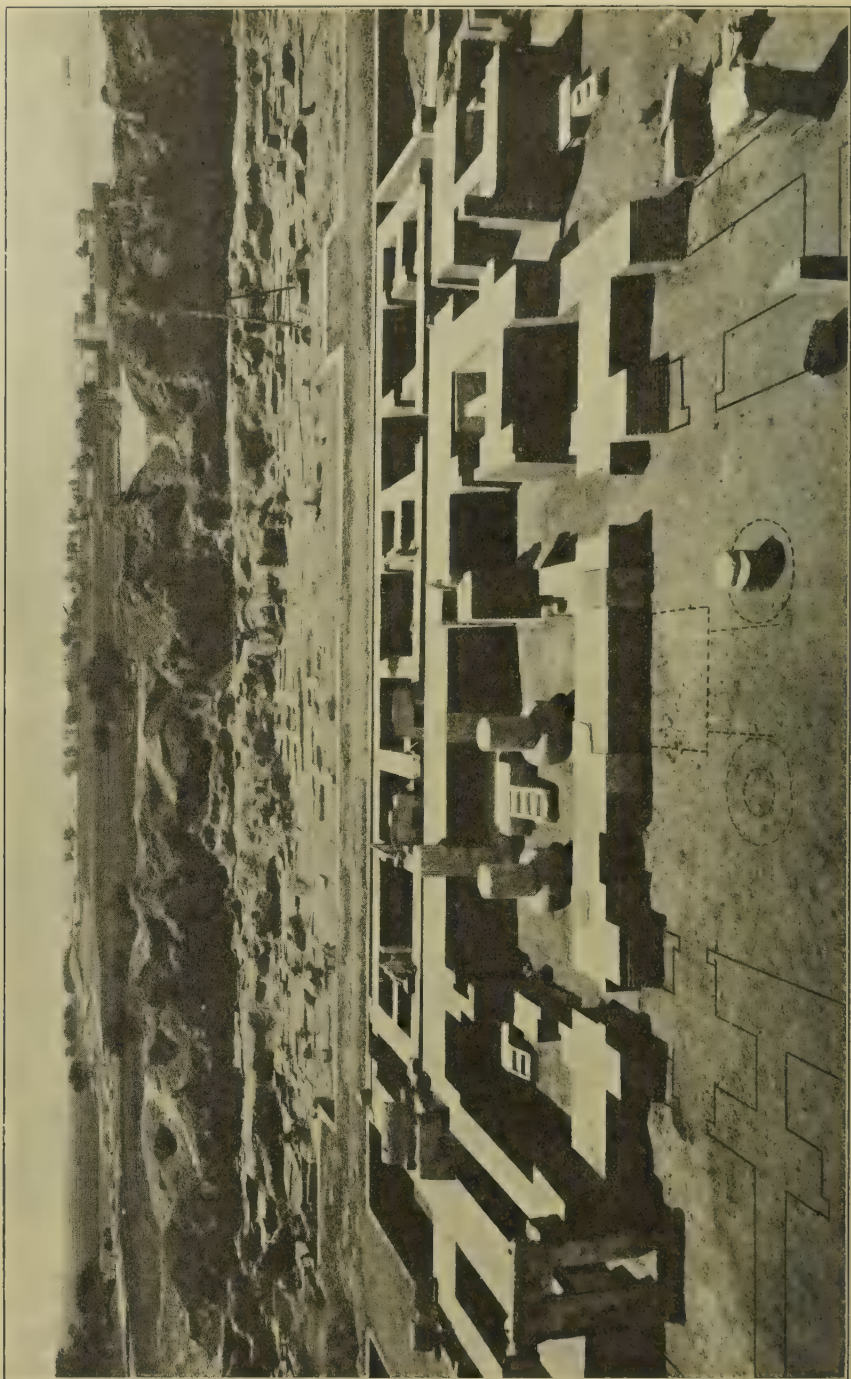
FIG. 12.—A RE-ERECTED DOORWAY INTO THE HAREM COURT

The restored portions of the doorway are left bare of decoration. The lintel was put together out of more than twenty fragments.



FIG. 13.—RESTORATIONS AT THE SECOND PALACE

We look southward from the south wall of the temple. At left in the foreground is the corner of the first pylon. Beside it are brick foundations, thresholds, and remains of columns of the palace as excavated. In the middle distance the foundations are hidden under a layer of sand and rubbish. In the background is the restored rear portion of the palace. The stone columns, pilasters, and bases of the thrones are almost without exception ancient, whereas the connecting brick walls rising upon the ancient foundations are for the most part restored.



vate apartments. Beside it stands the inscription: "The king appears in the palace of his august temple."

Of all these architectural members, the original positions of which we have positively determined, unfortunately nothing can be replaced *in situ*, because the second palace, with an entirely different arrangement of rooms, was built on top of the first palace. But we may hope that these pieces will be set up later in a small local museum near-by to bring out as well as possible their original effect.

Of the second palace also, built by Ramses III a few decades later to replace the first, the ground plan and elevation had been determined in the main during the first campaign.¹ In 1928/29 it was our object to complete the details of the picture previously gained (Fig. 10).

As shown in *OIC*, No. 5, Figure 28, we found the palace largely destroyed. The walls had for the most part been removed down to the foundations. What was to be done with these exposed foundations? It is well known that excavated mud-brick walls cannot be preserved even in the dry climate of Upper Egypt. The thinner and lower the surviving portions, the more quickly they disintegrate after exposure. The only means of prevention is to cover them up again with sand and rubbish after investigating and measuring them. But that means taking away from our contemporaries the possibility of checking our conclusions. We could not make up our minds to do that in the case of this highly significant royal palace.

The problem was further complicated by the fact that the ruins did not consist exclusively of mud-brick walls, for all the essential architectural elements were of sandstone. But relatively few of the

¹ See *OIC*, No. 5, Figs. 30 and 35.

FIG. 14.—GENERAL VIEW OF THE RESTORED PORTION OF THE SECOND PALACE

Compare the ground plan in *OIC*, No. 5, Figure 30. In the center the two-columned private living-room of the king is plainly recognizable. At left is his small bedroom with a raised recess for the bed. Then comes a standing gateway with a narrow corridor behind it leading to the harem. At right lies the room through which the private apartments were entered, and beside it the royal bath and toilet and a small side room. The three harem apartments continue still farther to the right, extending behind the royal quarters. The front rooms of the palace have not yet been restored, but are marked by lines on our picture.

stone pilasters, columns, doorposts, and the like remained standing *in situ*. Many had collapsed; they lay partly where they had fallen, partly in the vicinity at places whither they had been dragged. So far as their original position in the building was certain, we re-erected them, restoring a few relatively small fragments (Figs. 11 and 12). But the palace ruins, already obscure in arrangement and scarcely intelligible to a visitor, acquired thereby almost the appearance of a



FIG. 15.—THE PHARAOH'S TWO-COLUMNED LIVING-ROOM WITH THE ALABASTER BASE OF HIS THRONE

Three steps lead up to the throne, on which the king probably sat when he was being robed for temple ceremonies in the fantastic fashion shown in the temple reliefs. The bases of the columns are of elegant black granite; their shafts are of sandstone.

desolate Turkish cemetery, in which many tombstones loom without order or plan.

We decided, therefore, to rebuild to a uniform height the destroyed mud-brick walls between the preserved or re-erected stone jambs, in order to restore the continuity of the walls and to make intelligible the

plan of the palace (Figs. 13–17). In doing so, after thoroughly photographing and drafting them in detail, we took care to guard the ancient brick foundations against further destruction by an intervening layer of sand. They are thus preserved for verification, if desired, by a critical later generation. Moreover, the expert will easily recognize the modernity of the restored walls by the smaller bricks employed in the restoration.

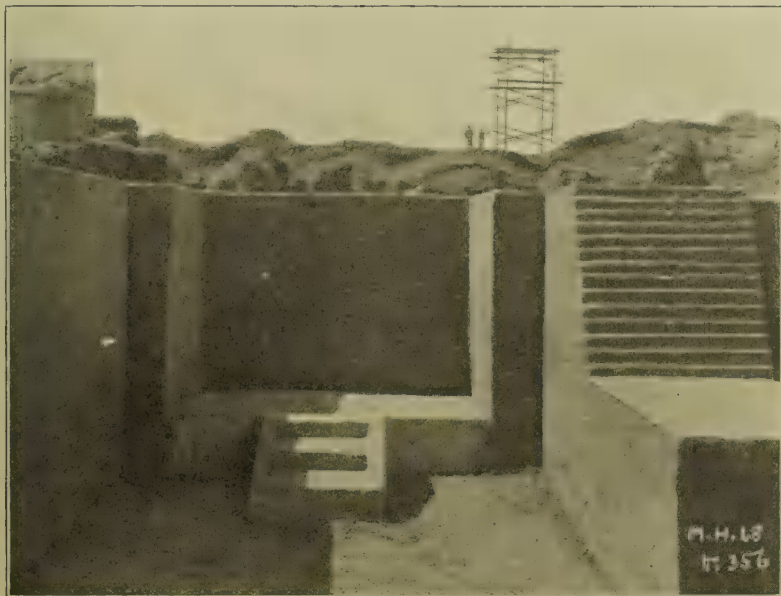


FIG. 16.—THE PHARAOH'S BEDROOM

The raised recess, reached by a small flight of steps, is a scant 2 meters long, so that a wooden bedstead such as is familiar to us from various surviving examples will just fit it.

Circumstances thus forced us to proceed step by step from excavation to conservation and from conservation to restoration. We were thoroughly conscious of the responsibility we were undertaking, for restoration is an activity which has only too often wrought irreparable harm to ancient monuments of art. We felt obliged, however, to undertake the task in this instance, because there seemed to be no other way by which the palace—the only royal palace in Egypt as yet known in detail—could be preserved for posterity.



FIG. 17.—A BATH AND TOILET IN THE HAREM

A bird's-eye view permits us to look beyond the screen wall, which prevented observation through the entrance, and note the arrangement of the room, with its wall sheathing, its hollowed-out floor slab, and the drainage into a basin set at a lower level.

Little need be said as to the course of the second campaign of excavation. The digging continued from the end of October, 1928, to the middle of March, 1929. The writer was assisted by Messrs. Steckeweh and Hanson. The photography was in charge first of Mr. Morrison and afterward of Mr. Leichter. In one way the work was much easier than that of the previous year, for now we had at our disposal a group of native workmen specially trained for this kind of excavation. Unfortunately, the seven native foremen whom we had taken over in 1927/28 from the Megiddo Expedition, with their *reis*, Hamid Ahmad Hamid, were not available for our second season, because they were needed at Megiddo itself. So we had to give the post of head *reis* to a new man, Sharid Muhammad Mansur. Though he is still rather young for such a large undertaking, he is reliable and very energetic, so that we expect to keep him at the head of the native workmen.

The small excavation house where we make our headquarters during the day has had a veranda added to it, on which one may sit sheltered from the countless flies which make it difficult for one to work in the open. A new storehouse erected beside it to shelter the finds has already been completely filled, so during next season an addition will have to be built.

The division of the finds has not yet taken place, but by agreement with the Egyptian Service des Antiquités has been postponed until the whole mass of material found can be examined at the conclusion of the excavation.

II

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HISTORICAL TEXTS COMMEMORATING RAMSES III

BY JOHN A. WILSON

A cultured Egyptian scribe of the twelfth century before Christ, well versed in the classics of his literature, might have bewailed the degenerate style of the temple scribes of his day. Remembering the crisp campaign annals of Thutmose III, he would shudder at the florid bombast with which Ramses III choked his records. Remembering the relatively pure Egyptian of the old literary classics, he would be oppressed by the straining artificiality evidenced by a profusion of foreign words and far-fetched metaphor. Remembering, if he could, the more rigid rules of grammar which defended the purity of the classical literature, he would feel a lofty pity for these scribes who labored to employ the old grammar but whose efforts were defeated by ignorance, haste, and the sheer weight of the spoken language. He would doubtless declare that the poets had sold their very souls for Pharaoh's gold.

If a modern may express an opinion on Egyptian style, this scribe would be just in his criticism of the temple compositions of his day, for the Medinet Habu texts are turgid, careless, and grammatically irregular. However, in comparing the Ramessid style with that of the classical Egyptian literature, he would be too severe. We must remember that at least three hundred very active years separate the Medinet Habu texts from the literature upon which they vaguely pattern themselves. When our more conservative poets compose verse, they build with a language which owes much to the Elizabethans and to the King James version of the Bible. If we are to accept the language of the Bible as a standard of grammar and style, our own speech will appear sadly degenerate; for correct literary English of the twentieth century uses a vocabulary and a grammar which would have been quite outlandish in King James's day. How much wider must have been the change in ancient Egypt, where the *spoken* language had

greater relative weight and where education was less general and less systematized. Again, we must remember that the "high" literature of any period has a decided drift toward artificiality. Those classic Egyptian models, the stories of Sinuhe and of the Eloquent Peasant, have far more affectation of style than such straightforward folk tales as those in the Papyrus Westcar or the Papyrus d'Orbiney. Yet all of these stories are more native, more subtly human, and less stupidly pompous than the Medinet Habu texts.

These texts are the culmination of an artificial poetizing which began under Thutmose III, at the latest. There was composed for this great conqueror a hymn of victory, in which poetic fancy was allowed full play.¹ Recently discovered fragments of papyri suggest that the pretentious epics of battle, which find their best-known expression in the Poem of Kadesh, go back at least as far as Thutmose III. Ramses III is able to plagiarize from his immediate predecessors entire inscriptions, which needed only to be brought up to date to be quite in place at Medinet Habu.² But these poems had already lost their novelty. It is almost literally true that the Pharaoh had already received every complimentary comparison and every glorifying epithet that the hard-pushed scribes could devise. In a wrong-minded effort at reinvigoration, they only laid it on the thicker. It is easy to make a slurring comparison between the Medinet Habu inscriptions and such a simple, human record as that on the Piankhi Stela, but the Ramessid texts were as much a product of their period as was the Piankhi Stela. The Egypt of Ramses III was big, cosmopolitan, somewhat jaded, and more than a little cynical. It stood only a generation before disintegration.³

¹ Of course such forms could not spring into being fully formed, without ancestry. Indeed, we may trace the germ of such poems back to the Middle Kingdom, to the hymn in honor of Sesostris III. But as yet we know of no poems dealing with a single campaign earlier than the time of Thutmose III.

² Three inscriptions on the front of the first pylon have known ancestors. One, "The Blessing of Ptah," is adapted from Ramses II's time. A second, consisting of a speech by Amon-Re, is taken from Seti I. The third, another speech of Amon-Re, is appropriated from Seti I, who in turn borrowed from Amenhotep III. This is, to be sure, in keeping with the geographical lists on the first pylon, which Ramses III blandly copied from earlier lists, without regard for accuracy or consistency.

³ Our remarks are based on the historical texts of the temple of Medinet Habu in the narrowest sense of the word, that is, those inscriptions which concern them-

Let us analyze one of the long historical poems of the temple. In justice it must be admitted that it is the most extreme specimen of its kind. This is an inscription on the rear of the first pylon, dated in the eleventh year of Ramses' reign, and purports to relate the course of the second Libyan war. It is sixty-two lines long. Following the date and title come thirteen lines in general praise of Pharaoh. Then follows a "historical" section of twenty-two lines on the aggression of the Libyans, their defeat and pursuit. This, however, is not given in narrative form but is imbedded deep in a matrix of royal glorification, where fact is almost buried in pretentious poetry. The scribe was, of course, far more interested in the matrix than in the nuggets of fact. Thereafter, in thirteen lines, the defeated enemy laud their conqueror, a characteristic trick of these poems. The abasement of the foe to the glory of Ramses takes up eight more lines, and the inscription ends with six lines wherein the Pharaoh, with his customary modesty, describes his glorious achievements. Thus we find that about a third of this long text is concerned with an important historical event, and even that third is almost suffocated in glorification of the king.

This may be taken as typical of these epics of battle. In such inscriptions we find a fulsome eulogy of the king following the title. The kernel of narration is always buried in the center and is liberally edited in the royal favor. The sorry plight of the defeated foe and their over-generous exclamations in praise of their conqueror follow. The final section deals generally with the king's benefactions to Egypt. We must remember that these compositions are not histories of campaigns but dithyrambic propaganda to ennoble his majesty in the sight of

selves with the wars of Ramses III. Of course the temple contains a mass of other inscriptions, dedicatory, building, calendar, and religious. Each class of texts has its own language. For example, the scenes of the Feast of Min are accompanied by a series of explanatory notes and fragments of ritual which probably descend from a very distant ancestor. In every respect these documents are poles apart from the war texts. The latter were much less guarded by prophylactic tradition; consequently, it is the war poems that broke out into the full rash of Ramessid style. Again, it must be noted that there are two types of historical inscriptions: (1) the lengthy poems and (2) the brief texts accompanying the reliefs. The latter serve vaguely as explanatory titles to the scenes which they accompany, but consist to a great extent of rather staccato eulogy of the king, complimentary dialogues between king and god, or laudatory chants by the Greek chorus of courtiers and captives.

gods and men. This may attain noble proportions in its finest form, as on the Israel Stela of Merneptah. In Medinet Habu, unfortunately, one feels that the poet is driven to protest too volubly. This insistent stressing of the magnificence and valor of the Pharaoh seems to mean either that a mediocre ruler had to be raised to the standard of his predecessors by excited protests or, more probably, that the jaded palate of his people demanded a more exotic and highly seasoned fare. One might point to a parallel in our own day. A public which saw the World War, which enjoys the automobile, the radio, and the motion picture, demands from its press a force and color of subject matter and language, a vicarious excitement from the printed word, that is unprecedented in recent times.

To illustrate this further, let us take a few lines of the same text which we examined above, from the section treating of the flight and pursuit of the defeated Libyans. We translate freely, as the inscription is unique in phraseology and now so broken that literal certainty is out of the question. The enemy

rose up and fled to the ends of the earth The pupils of their eyes squinted so that they could not see. The roads were blocked and stopped up before them, while the world was a whirlwind behind them to carry off their people. Their weapons had fallen from their hands, and their hearts knew no rest. . . . They were straggling, trembling and sweating. The *uraeus*-serpent which is upon the head of the Sun of Egypt (Pharaoh) was against them, so that the great heat of (the war-goddess) Sekhmet permeated their hearts and their bones were burned up within their bodies. The stars of the *seshed*-constellation were frightful in pursuit of them, while the land (of Egypt) was glad and rejoiced at the sight of his valor: Ramses III.

These are the words which tell us that the enemy fled in utter confusion, while Ramses was hot in pursuit of them. To these two thoughts all the elaborations of imaginative detail are contributory. We have been given, as it were, a prototype of the song of Deborah:

From heaven fought the stars,
From their courses they fought against Sisera.
The river Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.

But the bald account of the battle has been withheld from us.

Again, within the space of five consecutive lines, Ramses is compared to a hunting falcon, an angry bull, a strong wall of protection, a

roaring griffon, and a swift-running jackal, while at the same time it is admitted that he was an unerring marksman with the bow. These bewildering transformations hardly enhance for us the dignity of his majesty, but this heaping-up of figures is a much admired characteristic of oriental poetry. In rapid succession David likens Jehovah to a lamp, a shield, a rock, and a fortress. For the pictorially minded, a cinematographic strip may convey an impression of ferocity or protection where mere words would fall flat.

Since this account may have become somewhat depressing, it is necessary that we emphasize the presence of some forceful and vivid passages in the texts. A section describing the peaceful state of Egypt resulting from Ramses' good works relates that the land is so secure that the peasant woman may tuck up her skirt and go serenely abroad where she will, with free stride. "The land is (stretched out) flat on its back without a care; (for he is) a wall casting shade for the people, and they rest beside it in confidence of heart." To anyone who has traveled in Mediterranean lands, the care-free security envisaged in these words will be very intelligible. As the Egyptian army waited impatiently for the clash of battle, "their horses were quivering in every limb, ready to crush the foreign countries under their hoofs." Succinctly the attack of Ramses is pictured in the words: "His majesty fell upon them like a mountain of granite." One of the best figures is set in a conventional formula, as a promise of the god Amon to Ramses: "I shall make them see thy majesty like the sky overcast and bursting with storm, so that the trees are tossed before it down to their very roots."

There is a colloquial character to some of the words which sounds suspiciously like modern slang. Especially is this true in the accounts of the sorry plight of the enemy, always a fertile field for Egyptian humor. We have no one unquestioned case of this vulgar trend, but the cumulative evidence is impressive. Tentatively we may render one of these phrases: "The heart of the land of Temeh is taken away; the Peleset *are all up in the air*, hidden away in their towns." Again: "Those who attack him are thrown down *tail foremost*." More vulgarly and with a graphic determinative, we find: "Meshesher, (the defeated Libyan prince, is lying) *wide open* on the ground," and "the Meshwesh *give birth* out of fear of me." Such passages bring us nearer

to the Egyptian, with his mocking, somewhat ribald, and essentially pictorial humor.

We have been speaking of the Medinet Habu inscriptions as "poetry." This term refers rather to the lyric content and phraseology of these texts than to any metrical cast. Quantities of vowels and even the vowels themselves are not yet sufficiently determined for us to establish any definite cadence of verse. Indeed, Professor Erman has pointed out that free rhythm rather than a rigid meter characterizes Egyptian poetry. The most obvious verse characteristic is a sonorous balance of utterance, familiar to us from the Old Testament. Thus, in the inscription which we have already analyzed, does Ramses III call attention to the glories of his reign, speaking in carefully co-ordinated sentences:

Give heed to my utterances;
Hearken to them.

I speak to you;
I make you aware

That I am the son of Re,
Who issued from his body.

I sit upon his throne in rejoicing,
Since he established me as king,
As lord of this land.

My counsels are good;
My plans come to pass.

I protect Egypt;
I defend it.











I make it sit content in my time;
I overthrow for it every invader of its boundary.

I am rich in Niles bearing provisions;
My reign is flooded with good things.¹

It is clear that the length of any line here has a very general relation to the length of its parallel member, but no relation at all to the length of lines in other couplets. It will also be seen that this balance of members may extend even to a phrase within a couplet, as where "as king"

¹ Three obvious restorations have been included without special indication.

receives the additional "as lord of this land" for well-rounded elegance. The whole grandiloquent utterance is obviously "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," but it is unfortunately characteristic of much of the content of these supposedly historical texts.

However much a jungle the Medinet Habu inscriptions may be for the historian, they provide good hunting for the philologist. On the paleographic side, they offer much of interest. In general, the cutting of signs is coarse and careless. To a certain extent the quality of stone used condones this. Groupings of hieroglyphs occur such as no self-respecting Egyptologist would allow in a book of his. Evidence of haste is universal, notably in the inconsistencies of size, spacing, and grouping. We may find the signs in one line gross and wide apart, but small and cramped in the next column, with no obvious reason for this difference. Our chief interest lies in the forms of individual hieroglyphs. The ancient outline-draftsmen, who laid out the ink bases upon which the sculptors cut the signs, were clearly scribes who were more familiar with hieratic script than with hieroglyphs. Thus we may see the serpent  cut as the tongue , the chisel  as the jar , or the shepherd  as the king with a crook (No. 1 in Fig. 18). Again, signs tend to range toward their hieratic form. The numeral "30" is twice so cut in the temple (No. 2), the kiln  is often rendered in its cursive form (Nos. 3 and 4), and even so common a sign as  may be cut summarily like its hieratic form (No. 5). A student of the origin of signs could place little reliance upon the Medinet Habu hieroglyphs. With scribes who were more at home in hieratic, with sculptors who obviously had no set models to copy, they had entirely lost sight of the genesis of individual signs. The butcher's knife  is here represented as a furniture leg (Nos. 6 and 7); the palace  is a quiver with rounded bottom, its battlements becoming the arrows (No. 8); the bird  *sd*³, which we suppose to have been an egret, becomes generalized into a dying duck (No. 9). In the field of color, the Medinet Habu hieroglyphs may be studied with profit. In certain parts of the temple painted details have been beautifully preserved. Even here it must be noted that the colors often show inconsistencies, so that one must gather a considerable number of specimens before any generalizations are possible as to the original colors.

Grammatically the texts are of an unusual interest. To a certain

degree this interest lies in the failure of the Medinet Habu scribes to write the "Middle Egyptian" grammar at which they were aiming. When a modern says: "Between you and I, I know whom the guilty person is," he gives us a picture of himself and of his uncharted searching after correct diction. But there is slightly more to the case of the Ramessid scribe. He was groping after a style which had passed out of general use many centuries before, for which there was probably no

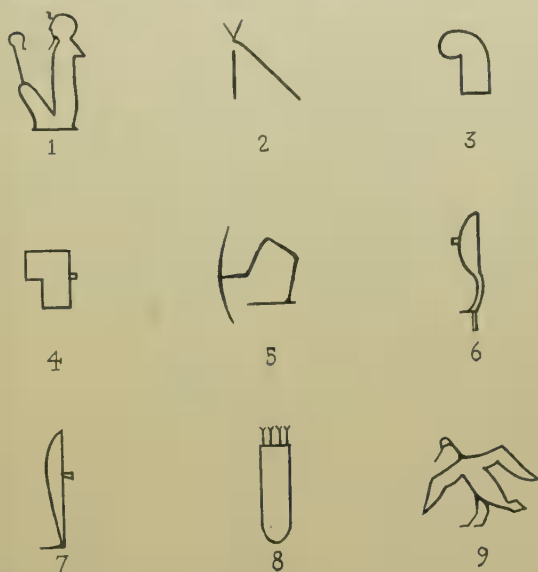




























FIG. 18.—ABNORMAL FORMS OF HIEROGLYPHS AT MEDINET HABU

uniform codification. In his failures and in the very effort of his successes, he tells us something about the grammar of his goal and the grammar of his day. We must only be patient enough to sift it out. Thus, when we find an old form   side by side with  , the later form, we know that the former is a conscious effort at correctness, while the latter is an unconscious employment of the current usage. The employment of   , normally "after," in place of the older    "throughout," is a false archaism which suggests that the earlier preposition had entirely passed out of use. A certain vagueness about the endings of the participial and old perfective forms tells us that current speech was equally vague or else already committed to a

fairly general suppression of endings. Interesting also are the frequent full writings of the prosthetic *alif* (occasionally as ) and of the *status pronominalis*. One might study these two forms at Medinet Habu with some profit; but such a study as the force of the negative words would fall flat, as the Ramessid scribe is irresponsibly impartial in his use of , , , and .

Many characteristic features of what we call "New Egyptian," the language of the scribe's day, are present, as they were perhaps too orally unobtrusive to be rooted out. To cite only a few, we might mention a somewhat indiscriminate use of the genitival adjectives , , and ; presence of both the prepositions  (as "because of") and  "with"; the determined infinitive; and a vagueness in the feminine endings. On the other hand, such characteristic features of New Egyptian as the conjunctive prefix  , the preposition  , and the conjunctions  and  are conspicuously absent. Should we, after a moderate amount of study, attempt to write Elizabethan English, we might expect to fall into similar inconsistencies. We should be so rigidly on our guard to avoid major pitfalls that we should trip on a number of minor snags.

The Medinet Habu texts are extreme in their choice of words. They exhibit a straining after the unusual word or phrase, a characteristic which is typical of the period and which is best illustrated in the satirical Papyrus Anastasi I. They take an especial relish in employing foreign words, borrowed usually from the Semitic tongues. Here is exhibited a striving for an arresting effect, a rather childish display of erudition, and also an increased internationalism. That Semitic words should be so profusely present in Medinet Habu points to cultural interrelations on a very brisk scale throughout the ancient Near East. Our own language exhibits this same borrowing from other tongues on a wide scale, with the difference that we tend to adopt foreign words and phrases for which we have no exact English equivalents, whereas the Ramessid scribe often abandoned a perfectly good Egyptian word in favor of the more arresting importation. Further, the texts show a goodly number of unique native Egyptian words, perhaps colloquialisms which the breaking-down of old barriers had permitted to flow over into temple documents. We have already hinted at these above. Both the foreign words and the colloquialisms

make the records less immediately intelligible, but ultimately they enrich our vocabulary and we are grateful for them.

It will perhaps be obvious that such generalizations as we have made with regard to the spirit of the Medinet Habu inscriptions apply with almost equal force to the Medinet Habu reliefs. Both are kindred aspects of the artistic, intellectual, and social life of the time. Both culminate the trend of the preceding centuries, but such a climax do they reach that they seem superficially to represent a distinct break with the past. A different set of ideals motivated their authors, who were essentially the same Egyptians as their ancestors. A loss in dignity and orthodoxy is partially counterbalanced by a gain in force and variety.

After all, who are we, moderns and mortals, to pass judgment on Medinet Habu? The king of the gods once found abundant satisfaction therein. It is written:

He made a monument for his father Amon; he made the House-of-Millions-of-Years on the west of Thebes. It is the place of his (Amon's) heart's content in the region of the Western Mountain, the sacred soil of the lord of the gods, the place of repose for his Nine Gods, a holy shrine since "the time of the god" for the king of the gods. He is content and satisfied in it. Whenever he visits it, he is joyful of heart.

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY *of* CHICAGO

MEDINET HABU REPORTS

I THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY 1928-31

By HAROLD H. NELSON

II THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY 1929/30

By UVO HÖLSCHER



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I

THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

1928-31

II

THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

1929/30

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FIG. 1.—THE SOUTH SIDE OF

This wall constitutes also the façade of the palace which abuts upon the first court. It was here that the king and foreign ambassadors assembled when the king held court. When the temple was occupied by the king, the roof with private dwellings of unburned brick, while other structures were built above on the



THE FIRST COURT AT MEDINET HABU

Between the fourth and fifth columns is the "window of (royal) appearances" before which the courtiers
as a place of residence in Coptic days, the space within the colonnade (cf. Fig. 29) was filled to the
of itself.

I
THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY
1928-31

By HAROLD H. NELSON

INTRODUCTION

The work of recording the reliefs and inscriptions at Medinet Habu has continued steadily since our last report¹ and has resulted in the completion of the more secular portions of the material on the walls of the Great Temple. The content of our first volume of plates, published last year,² extends through Ramses III's eighth regnal year and includes the records of three campaigns, those against the Nubians, the Libyans, and the Sea Peoples. The remaining historical subjects now copied deal with a second campaign against the Libyans, dated in the year 11, and one or more expeditions into Syria-Palestine. There is also a considerable body of reliefs which are either purely conventional in form, such as are found on every Egyptian temple of the period, depicting the king slaughtering representative enemies before the god, or which have to do with non-military activities, the hunting of game or the reviewing of the royal stud. In addition, there are numerous inscriptions of a very general character that narrate in vague terms those achievements of the monarch that he regarded as most worthy of record, either because of the glory they would cast upon himself or because they would increase his claim upon the favorable consideration of the gods. Our second volume of plates, now on the press, includes practically all of this material.

The content of this second volume is drawn from the walls inclosing the first court of the Great Temple. This portion of the building is not merely the forecourt of the temple proper, but also serves as the courtyard of the royal palace, the façade of which forms its southern wall (Fig. 1). Just as the king adorned the western side of this inclosure with a relief and a long inscription recording his triumph

¹ "Oriental Institute Communications," No. 5.

² "Oriental Institute Publications," Vol. VIII: *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I.

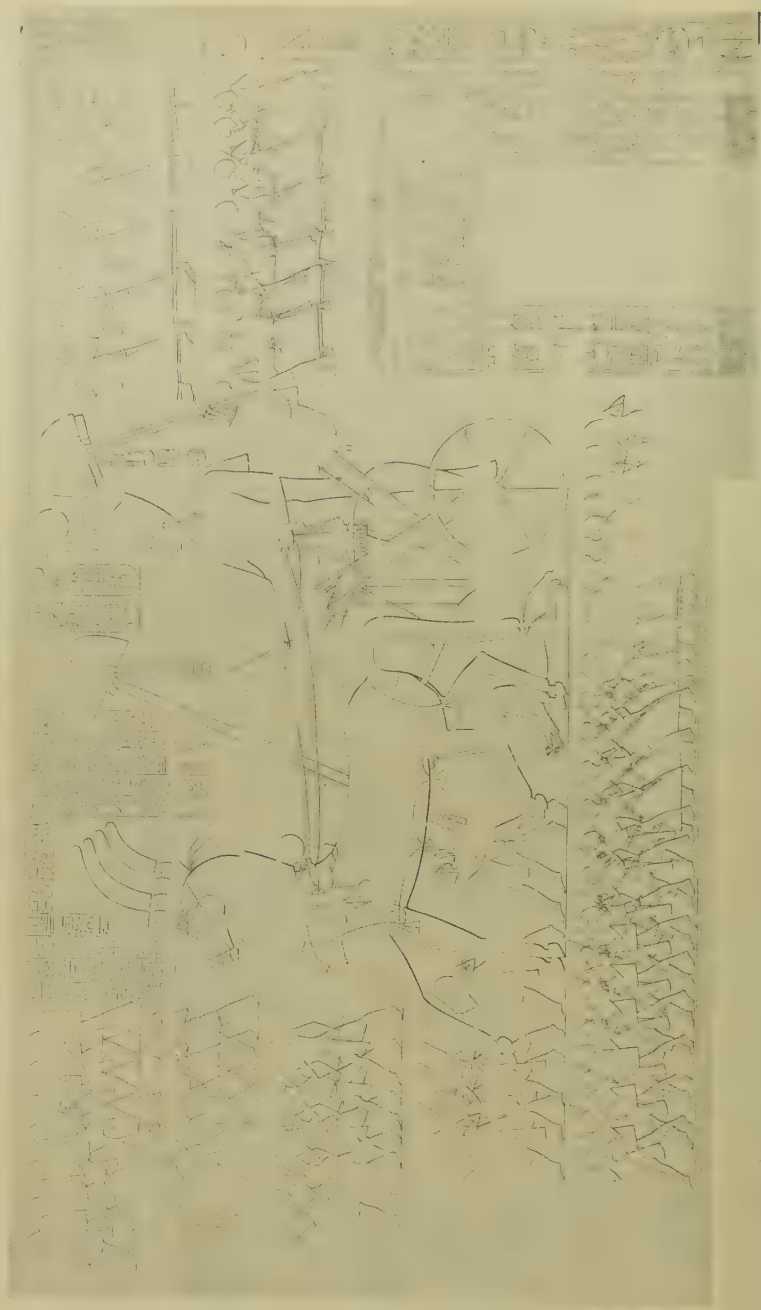


FIG. 2.—RAMSES III AND HIS SUITE ON PARADE

over the Sea Peoples,¹ so he decorated its eastern side with two reliefs and two inscriptions celebrating his victory over the Meshwesh-Libyans, thus giving pride of place to his two greatest military achievements. The north wall commemorates his conquests in Syria-Palestine, while the "window of (royal) appearances" in the center of the palace façade on the south side is flanked by scenes from the monarch's more peaceful activities. The decoration of this forecourt shows a pleasing and well-balanced arrangement of relief and inscription appropriate to the approach to both palace and temple.

THE PHARAOH AND HIS ATTENDANTS

In the new volume of plates a striking relief from the palace front shows Ramses III on parade, attended by representatives from the army and the court (Fig. 2). The scene is strongly reminiscent of Amarna reliefs that depict Ikhnaton and his queen out for a drive.² But whereas at Amarna the impression conveyed is one of undignified



FIG. 3.—IKHNATON DRIVING IN PUBLIC

(After N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*, Part II, Pl. XIII.) Compare the treatment of this figure with that of Ramses III in Fig. 2. Though the Amarna artist has been much freer in his lines, the fact that the two compositions belong to the same traditional scene is quite evident.

haste, at Medinet Habu it is that of a stately procession. In the midst rises the towering figure of the king in his chariot drawn by prancing horses. The long flowing mantle falling below the level of the Pharaoh's feet hangs in more restrained lines than does that of Ikhnaton driving at breathless speed (Fig. 3), but the cloak and its treatment are the same. Moreover, the chariot displays to the beholder not only its side, as elsewhere at Medinet Habu, but the front as well, like its prototype at Amarna, this being the sole instance of such treatment of the subject at our temple. The city of the Aton was but a crumbling ruin in Ramses III's day, and his artists had probably never seen its

¹ *Ibid.*, Plates 44 and 46.

² N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*, Part II, Pl. XIII.

desolation; but the figure of the Pharaoh before us here certainly belongs in the line of tradition that had long since stereotyped many of the elements of Egyptian monumental art—elements that trace their ancestry back to Amarna days or, more probably, to still older origins.

Before the king march the usual selected groups of the military (Fig. 4), Egyptians and foreigners, the latter including Sherden, Bedouins, and other peoples from Asia, together with a group of negroes, two clad in their native costume and armed with the Nubian club, the other three garbed like Egyptians and carrying the whip used by officers and other functionaries in the Pharaoh's service (Fig. 5). These five figures are of special interest, as they show a careful distinction between the two types. At Medinet Habu, of all the foreign peoples in the royal army, only the negroes are brigaded with the Pharaoh's subjects. This association is seen in two instances already published,¹ in which the Nubians are uniformed and equipped like their immediate companions. In Figure 4, however, no Egyptians are associated with the negroes, but the latter are differentiated into two kinds, one purely Nubian and the other Egyptianized. It is possible that the artist has here distinguished between the natives from the provinces up the river and the negroes who had already long since settled in Egypt. Earlier representatives of such a class are referred to in some of the royal decrees of the Old Kingdom as the "peaceful" or "settled" negroes.² Here each of the Egyptianized negroes carries a whip without a lash. The whip seems to serve as a symbol of authority, much as the modern foreman of a gang of Egyptian laborers always carries a stick. Figure 5 shows several figures from Medinet Habu, all of whom are so equipped. Numbers 1 and 2 are each a *sais* or runner before the royal chariot. Number 3 is an officer in charge of recruits mobilized for the northern war. Number 4 is an officer herding a gang of Syrian prisoners. Number 5 is an officer of the guard in attendance upon the king during the celebration of the victory over the Sea Peoples. It may be that we have in Figure 4 negro officers of the Mazoi or gendarmes in attendance upon the monarch as he rides forth in public through the streets. The whip was certainly not a

¹ *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pls. 16 and 31.

² *Zeitschrift für äg. Sprache*, XLII (1905), 7.

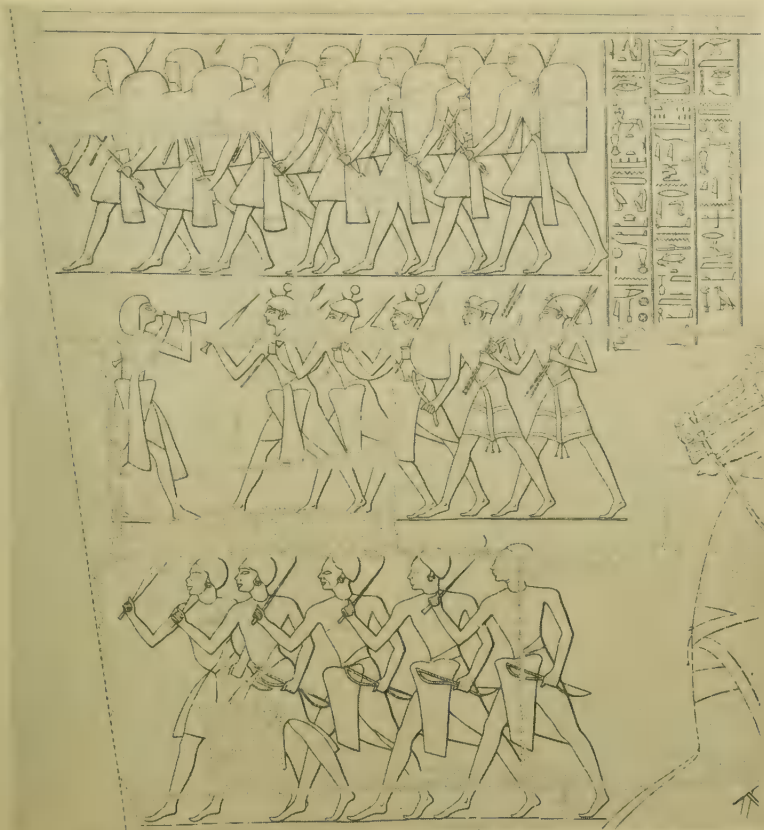


FIG. 4.—NATIVE AND FOREIGN TROOPS IN THE SERVICE OF EGYPT

(Enlarged detail of scene shown in Fig. 2.) The upper register shows native Egyptian troops in the conventional military garb of the period. The details of dress and shields are partly preserved in paint. The points of the lances are yellow, possibly representing gilded bronze. As these figures presumably stand for the royal bodyguard, their accoutrement would naturally be more sumptuous than that of ordinary troops. The skirts of the uniforms are apparently semitransparent, as the artist has indicated in paint (a light pink) the backs of the thighs appearing through the cloth. In the second register, besides the trumpeter, come first three Sherden in Egyptian military garb but with the round shields of their native equipment (cf. Fig. 10). The Sherden certainly, and possibly the other foreigners in this register, are represented with short black beards. Their helmets are gold with copper (green) horns. The body color of the Sherden is the vermillion usual for peoples from the farther North, but that of the South Palestinians to the right is salmon. These latter carry the throw stick of the Asiatic and two lances apiece. Only once at Medinet Habu do Egyptians carry two lances (*Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 42); but the Palestinians from the South wherever represented at the temple carry two (*ibid.*, Pls. 17, 31, and 35), the Sherden do so once (*ibid.*, Pl. 35), and the Philistines once (*ibid.*, Pl. 34). In the lowest register it is interesting to note how the artist has avoided obscuring the face of the foremost negro by tucking his companion's club under his chin.

weapon of offense, but probably corresponded to the cane of a modern army officer.

Returning to Figure 2, directly before the king's horses march three of the princes of the royal house, each with the plume and crook of highest court rank. In the lowest register comes first a contingent of the bodyguard, followed by a group of men each of whom has a coil of rope around his shoulders. Only officers seem to carry such ropes at Medinet Habu.¹ From the artist's arrangement of these figures it is difficult to decide whether they belong with the group preceding

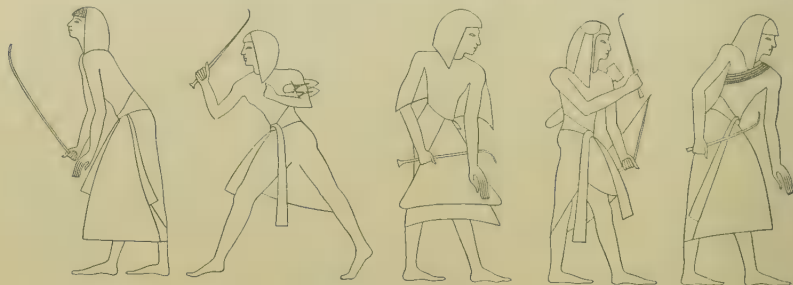


FIG. 5.—FIGURES AT MEDINET HABU WHO CARRY THE WHIP

For a clear example of officers so equipped, see Figure 26

or that following, though it is more probably the former than the latter. After the officers come the court bailiffs, shaven-headed, in long robes, and holding the short club or stick which they regularly carry.² These are the leaders of the civil functionaries who go to make up the remaining characters of the scene. Behind the bailiffs come the inevitable scribes, without whom all but the battle pieces seem

¹ Cf. Fig. 26 and *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pls. 17, 37, and 42.

² These members of the Pharaoh's personal suite, the *wb3w*, appear frequently at Medinet Habu. Cf. *ibid.*, Pls. 38 and 42, and this article, Figs. 15 and 24. They carry a stick, sometimes two—not the club with the peculiar bent guard at the handle which was used in battle (cf. Carter and Mace, *The Tomb of Tut'ankh'Amen*, Vol. I, Pl. LXXI, A). They head the group of royal attendants (cf. Figs. 2, 15, and 24). In the Kadesh reliefs of Ramses II (Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, II. Teil, Taf. 92) at the Ramesseum the *wb3w* are shown defending the royal tent against those of the Hittites who have advanced so far into the Egyptian camp. Most of those so engaged in the Kadesh battle are such *wb3w* as carry the king's quivers and generally bring up the rear of the group at Medinet Habu. Cf. also Champollion, *Monuments de l'Égypte et de la Nubie* (Paris, 1835–45), Tome I, Pl. XXIX (Abu Simbel).

incomplete. Over the doorway in two registers appear the personal attendants of the monarch and the highest officers of state—the eldest of the princes, the two viziers, a royal scribe, a court herald, and two other functionaries of uncertain office.

On this portion of the wall the color is, in places, fairly well preserved, especially where the king's personal attendants are placed, so

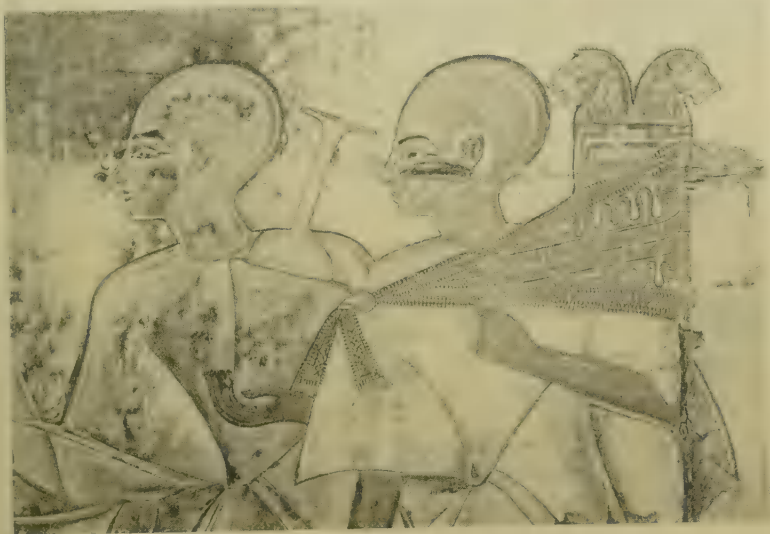


FIG. 6.—TWO OF RAMSES III'S PERSONAL ATTENDANTS

The man on the left carries the royal washbasin and ewer for the Pharaoh's ablutions. In the lower left corner of Figure 8 is a similar individual carrying basin and ewer, but with a towel tied around the neck of the latter. The second man carries what seems to be a quiver surmounted by two lions' heads or possibly a sheath with two daggers. The gaily colored cloth by which it is tied to his back is a fine example of ancient woven patterns.

that the details of their accouterments are plainly visible (Fig. 6). The royal sunshades, green and blue and red, are still vividly painted. The details of the military in the upper registers before the Pharaoh present certain interesting points. The Sherden and other northerners are each adorned with a short, black beard shown entirely in paint and not protruding beyond the outline of the face. The earlier copyists, in their rendering of such figures as they saw them a hundred years ago at Abu Simbel, seem thus fully justified.¹ In only one or

¹ Cf. *ibid.*, Pl. XXVIII; Rosellini, *Monumenti storici*, Pl. CI.

two instances at Medinet Habu are the non-Semitic northerners visibly represented as wearing beards. The traces of this colored detail surviving at this spot suggest that elsewhere, while not showing heavy facial hair, these strangers were not clean shaven. This is another instance of the interesting items lost from the reliefs with the vanished color.

THE SECOND LIBYAN WAR

Some time between year 5 and year 11 of Ramses III's reign a change took place upon Egypt's western frontier that was destined to have far reaching effects upon the country's future. From time immemorial the Libyan tribes known to the Egyptians as the Tehenu and the Temehu, with certain subsidiary groups, had filled the western horizon of the Nile-dwellers with the constant menace of invasion. From the days of the Old Kingdom down, we have records of a long series of wars with these peoples. Apparently there never was any serious attempt on Egypt's part to conquer the Libyans and to hold their territory. Their country was probably too poor to offer much inducement to conquest, while the tribes were politically so scattered and disunited as to make a decisive victory followed by annexation out of the question, contrary to the possibilities offered by an Asiatic campaign. Egypt's wars with the Libyans seem always to have been defensive, devoted to guarding the frontier against invasion or to driving back to their desert homes such bands as successfully broke through the line of border fortresses.

The reigns of Merneptah and Ramses III, with the disturbed period between, witnessed a most determined effort on the part of the Libyans to penetrate into the Delta. At about that time the old hereditary enemies of Egypt, the Tehenu and Temehu, were reinforced by kindred tribes from farther west, the Meshwesh, who thenceforth played an increasingly important rôle in the constant border wars. At first the Meshwesh seem to have been merely a part of the invading hordes, and perhaps much the least important. The campaign of the year 5 of Ramses III led to a severe defeat of the Tehenu and Temehu at the hands of the Egyptians. Though not so utterly devastating as the Pharaoh would have us believe, it was probably sufficiently severe to leave them thoroughly weakened and unable successfully to maintain their dominance among the Libyan peoples. At any rate, the position of chief opponent of the Egyptians seems to have passed to the Mesh-

wesh. These latter fell upon the disorganized remnants of the Tehenu and devastated their land. Then at the head of a Libyan combination they attempted the invasion of the western Delta.

In the longest and perhaps the most difficult of the records from Medinet Habu, an inscription dated in the year 11 of his reign, Ramses III tells in a few brief sentences the story of this momentous series of events. Connected with this inscription and illustrating the story is a series of remarkable reliefs, among the finest at the temple. The record is supplemented by a poem of victory on the front of the pylon and by a passage in Papyrus Harris. The record runs:

As for the Meshwesh, not before known, he came together, his land with him, and fell upon the Tehenu, who were made ashes and their cities spoiled and desolated. Their seed is not, by the excellent commands of this god to slay the invader of Egypt. "We will settle in Egypt"—so spake they with one accord, and they continually entered the boundaries of Egypt.

The poem informs us that "they took counsel again to plot rebellion to spend their lives in the confines of Egypt. They mustered the hills and plains of their districts." Papyrus Harris, somewhat more specific, states:

The Libyans and the Meshwesh were dwelling in Egypt, having plundered the cities of the western shore from Memphis to Kerben. They had reached the great river on both its banks. . . . Behold, I destroyed them, slain at one time. . . . They were overthrown in their blood and made heaps. I turned them back from trampling the border of Egypt. I carried away those whom my sword spared, as numerous captives, pinioned like birds before my horses, their women and their children by ten-thousands, their cattle in number by hundred-thousands.¹

The series of reliefs of this Libyan war, unlike those illustrating the war of the year 5, shows none of the events leading up to the actual engagement with the enemy, but begins with the battle itself on the western edge of the Delta. This event is recorded in two places, on the outside of the north wall of the first court and also on the west face of the first pylon in the court itself. These reliefs show the pursuit of the defeated enemy back into the western desert whence he came (Figs. 7 and 8). Over each scene is a similarly worded title: "The slaughter which his majesty made in the land of the Meshwesh who came into Egypt, from the town of Ramses-Ruler-of-Heliopolis, which

¹ After Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Vol. IV (Chicago, 1906), § 405.

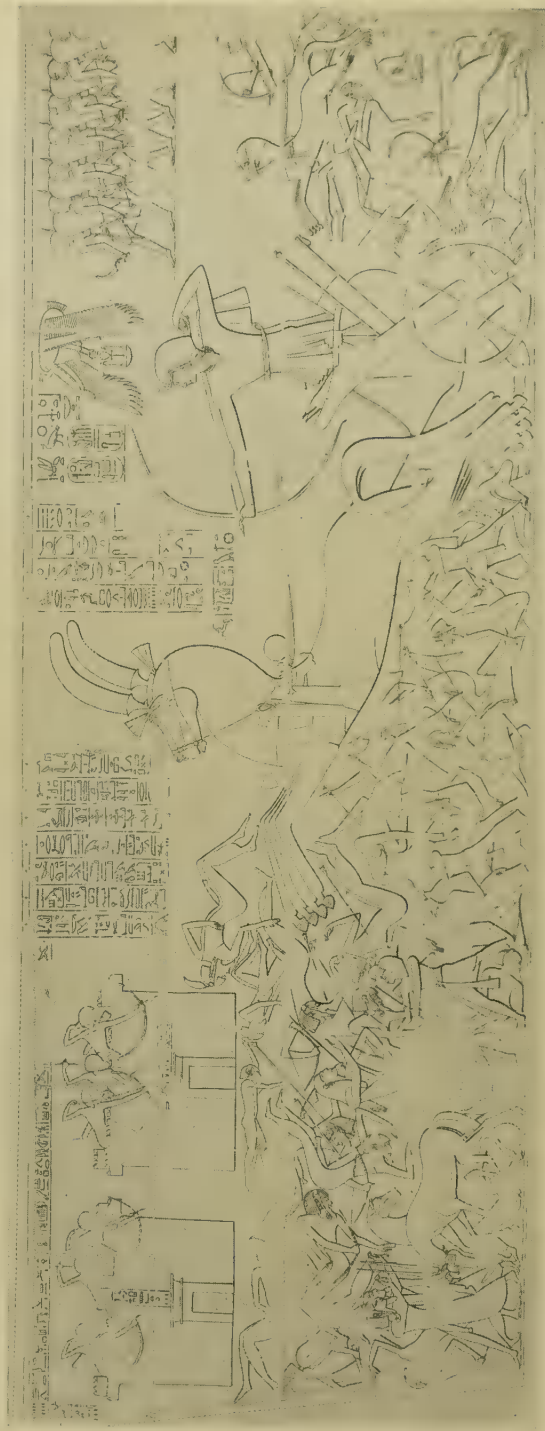


FIG. 7.—RAMSES III PURSUING THE FLEEING LIBYANS

The two fortresses manned by Egyptian archers were, according to the inscription, eight iiters (about eleven miles) apart on the western edge of the Delta. The Meshwesh chieftain, with the plume and long hair of his rank and with his garment suspended from his shoulders by crossed bands in ancient Libyan style, is a striking figure though sadly defaced. The full-faced rendering of one of his horses—a position shown several times at Medinet Habu—is of interest. Note the long swords of the Libyans in contrast to those wielded by the Egyptians.

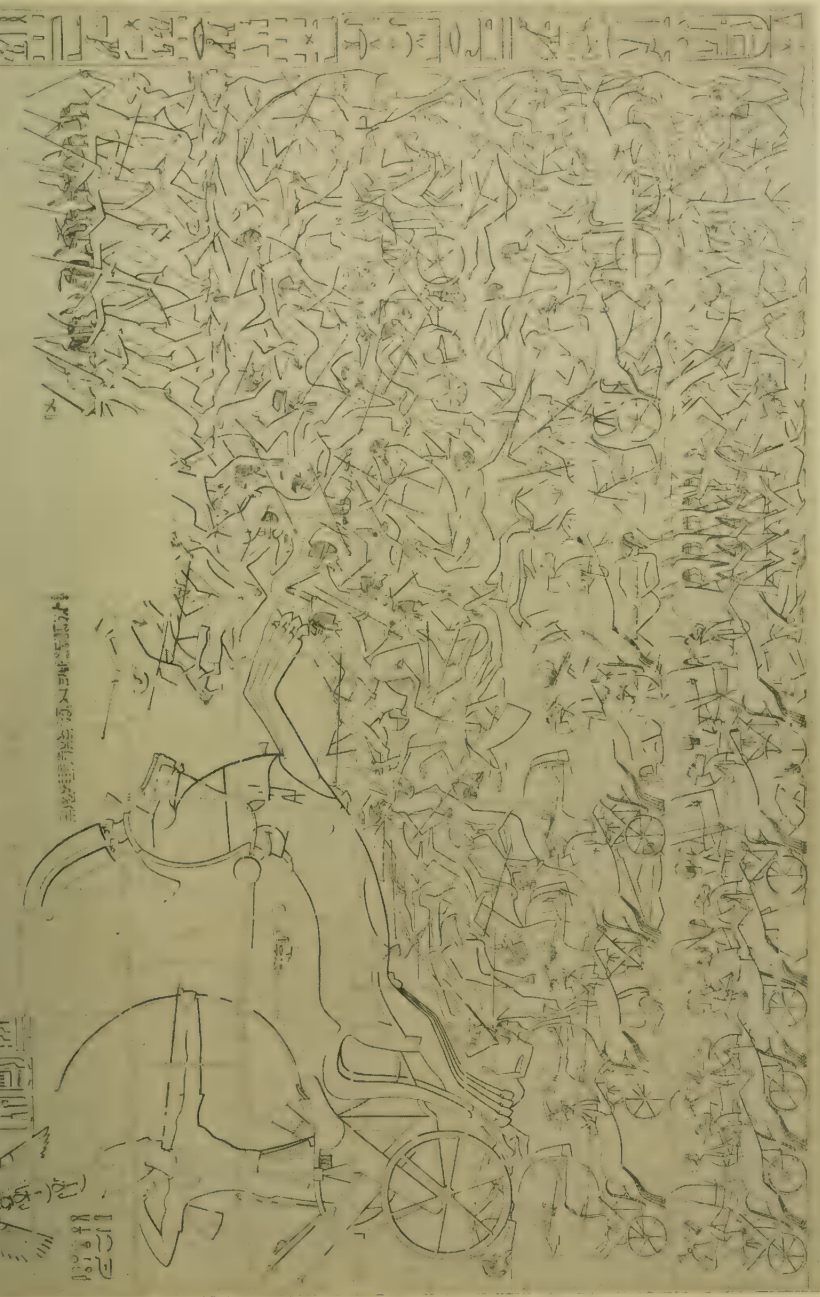


FIG. 8.—RAMSES III PURSUING THE FLEEING LIBYANS

This is a companion piece to Figure 7, more elaborate in detail but lacking the two fortresses. The lowest register is of special interest. To the right are Philistine and Sherden troops in the Egyptian service (cf. Fig. 10). In the center is a fine group of massed Egyptian infantry. The left half of the register shows six chariots, the first three occupied by royal princes, each with his shield-bearer beside him with shield extended to cover him; the last three containing noncombatant members of the king's personal following, not clad in mail shirts like the princes but in the usual civilian dress of their office. Such personal attendants were also present with Ramses II at the Hittite attack on his camp before Kadesh and received the commendation of the Pharaoh for their faithfulness in standing by him when his army fled. Below and in front of the forefeet of the king's horses is a group showing an Egyptian binding a Libyan which is repeated almost exactly as a hieroglyph for the word "bind" in the inscription in large characters on the front of the first pylon at the top of the south tower.

is at the mountain of Up-to, to the town of Hat-sho, making eight iters of slaughter among them."¹ The scene on the north wall (Fig. 7) shows us the two fortresses mentioned in the ancient title to the illustration, each manned by Egyptian archers, who discharge arrows at the foe fleeing before the Pharaoh's terrific onslaught. In the midst of the enemy is the Meshwesh chief, his hand raised in supplication with the peculiar gesture which seems to have been used when suing for mercy or to ward off evil, a gesture possibly intended to be of magic efficacy in preventing the operation of the evil eye or the like hostile power.² The scene in the first court (Fig. 8), depicting the same event, shows the Libyan enemy fleeing out of the Nile Valley up onto the heights of the desert plateau. This composition is clearly parallel in construction to that in *Medinet Habu*, Volume I, Plates 19 and 20. There we find the red background of the desert, the Red Land, with the contour of the valley side up which the defeated Libyans are retreating in confusion. Were the painted details here equally well preserved, we should most probably find the same red profile of the cliffs running upward in front of the Pharaoh's horses to the ground line of the topmost register of the fleeing Libyan chieftains. Many of the minor points of this composition are of considerable interest, while the execution of the figures is some of the best work at Medinet Habu (Figs. 9-11).

BATTLE SCENES

Of battle pieces representing engagements in the open, there are eight examples at Medinet Habu, besides four representing sieges of towns. The former are all arranged on the same general plan, though

¹ See Gardiner in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, V (1918), 134-35.

² On Figure 9 the two gestures usually made by the king's enemies in the presence of the Pharaoh can be plainly seen. One, made by raising the hand with all the fingers extended and the palm outward, is used by officers leading up captives before the king, though in the latter case, as compared with the position of the enemies' hands, the Egyptians' hands are raised above their heads in a sort of Fascist salute. The other, a peculiar gesture suggestive of some magical import, seems to have been made with the first finger and thumb extended upward and the other three fingers bent downward (cf. Fig. 9, last Libyan to right) or, more frequently, with the thumb and little finger extended and the first three fingers crooked (cf. *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 34, the Philistine in the chariot just to the left of the bottom of the inscription). This same gesture is still in use in Mediterranean lands as protection against the evil eye.

there is great variation in detail. They agree in organization with a tradition governing the subject since the 18th dynasty at least, though actual survivals from pre-Amarna days are very few. That the general scheme was well established by the end of the 18th dynasty the scenes on Tutenkhamon's painted casket clearly prove.¹ Before the time of Ikhnaton only Thutmose IV's chariot and the fragment of a stela of



FIG. 9.—LIBYAN CHIEFTAINS FLEEING BEFORE THE PHARAOH'S ONSLAUGHT
Detail from scene shown in Figure 8

Amenhotep III at Cairo have survived. The Amarna reliefs contain no battle pieces and are not organized in the same way, though their spaciousness and the comprehensiveness of their narrative quality clearly affected the development of the art of the next two dynasties. It has been pointed out² that it was the response of the Egyptian artists to the problem set them by a victorious ruling house obsessed by its own greatness and anxious to perpetuate it in monumental

¹ Carter and Mace, *op. cit.*, Pl. LIII.

² A. Erman, *Aegypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, neu bearb. von H. Ranke (Tübingen, 1923), p. 490.

form, that led them to attempt things undreamed of by their predecessors and to break through the restraints of the traditional art. This new artistic development never reached its full fruition. It was still in the experimental stage in Ramses III's day when the last of the great war reliefs was carved for the glory of the last of the great mili-



FIG. 10.—SHERDEN WARRIORS IN ACTION

Detail from scene shown in Figure 8. One of the Sherden is shown cutting off a hand from a dead Libyan. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the foreign auxiliaries apparently had no part in the triumphal celebrations at which the hands taken from the slain were counted and credited to the holders of the trophies. Yet here and elsewhere they are shown in the act of removing hands from the dead. Notice that the Sherden grasps the hand by the thumb. This seems to have been the usual method of holding them; cf. Figure 15 here and *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pls. 22, 23, and 34 (left end). The artist has been careful to present the limpness of the dead hand.

tary pharaohs. With the reaction of the theocratic 21st dynasty the return to the traditions of the fathers was complete, and the new art died with the cessation of the victories on foreign soil that had called it into being.

The composition of these scenes is seemingly a development of the Old and Middle Kingdom reliefs.¹ There we see at one side of the field the figure of the person about whom the interest of the subject centers. It may be the lord of the estate as he inspects his fields, his flocks, his artisans; or it may be the high official superintending the



FIG. 11.—A DEAD LIBYAN

One of a number of fine heads from the scene shown in Figure 8

activities of his subordinates, issuing supplies from the government storehouse, or receiving petitions. In every case this figure in whose honor the work is produced is drawn on gigantic scale as compared to the lesser individuals, who are represented not for themselves but because they demonstrate by their presence and activities the importance of their superior. This explanatory section of the relief is divided into registers in which the minor characters are shown as mere pigmies in height in comparison to the dominant figure. Some, differentiated from the rest by reason of close association with the chief subject of the composition, may be drawn on a scale intermediate be-

¹ On the development of the Empire battle scenes see H. Schaefer's penetrating study in his *Von ägyptischer Kunst* (3d ed.; Leipzig, 1930), chap. iv.

tween the two extremes, thus introducing the principle of gradation according to relative importance to the end the artist had in view. Undoubtedly, also, the artist felt the incongruity in too great a difference of size between two figures represented in action together. Artistic feeling, as well as reasons of emphasis, influenced all such Egyptian compositions.

Before the close of the Middle Kingdom a further development from these earlier reliefs had taken place in the presentation of hunting scenes, where the rigid registration of the older art gave way to efforts to represent the irregularities of the desert waste. Both the older and the later arrangement of the figures in a scene showing many individuals in action over a wide area appear in the Empire battle pictures.

The great battle reliefs at Medinet Habu show clearly the influence of this earlier art. The Pharaoh is here the hero of the story, and the other characters derive their significance merely from their relation to him. The theme of the artist is the monarch's prowess, his greatness and glory, his godlike and invincible might. He must be singled out from both his enemies and his supporting army in such a way that there will be no doubt in the mind of the beholder as to where the full credit for the achievement is to be placed. He is therefore drawn in colossal proportions with all the splendor of calm and confident majesty. He is placed at one side of the scene, as was the dominant figure in the old reliefs, standing in his chariot drawn by a team of splendid horses but little less colossal than himself. Below his chariot or beneath its wheels lie one or more of his fallen enemies, who are also sometimes drawn on a larger scale than their comrades elsewhere, as though they too derived some special significance from the fact that it is the king's chariot that crushes them. This gradation of figures may be clearly discerned in such scenes as the naval battle,¹ where the enemy warriors, the subject second in importance to the king, rank in size between the monarch and the crews of the Egyptian ships. Only those of the Egyptians who come in close contact with the enemy, such as the individuals leaning over the side of the upper left Egyptian boat and engaged in pulling aboard certain of the enemy who are swimming toward them, are drawn on a scale commensurate with the figures of the Sea Peoples. Their size is apparently due to their rela-

¹ *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 39.

tion to the larger enemy figures. The artist did not wish to emphasize the part played in the victory by the Egyptian fleet. The glory must be diverted entirely to the Pharaoh. However, in the lower registers, where prisoners are led away by Egyptian officers, captors and captives are of practically the same size. Here the king has no part in the action; hence the necessity for gradation in size does not enter.

A clear example of the variations in size is shown in Figure 12. There the king is binding two Libyan captives. He has descended from his chariot and has therefore come into close contact with the other figures of the scene. Here the artist has arranged his figures in descending scale: first, the Pharaoh; next, the two enemies he is binding; and third, the common run of Libyans, who are not the immediate subject of the royal interest. This principle cannot be pushed too far, for other considerations than relative importance for the theme may govern the artist's treatment of the figures. Considerations of artistic effect, space to be filled, convenience of handling, will all play a part in determining the size of the various elements of the composition.

Immediately below the Pharaoh's horses (Fig. 7) is a confused mass of the enemy, their positions accommodated to the curves of the animals' legs and bellies, so that in but few instances are they ever obscured by the monarch's chargers, except where occasionally the hoofs and lower legs of the horses cut across some figure; nor, in turn, do the bodies of the fallen overlie the royal span. This heap of slain continues forward in front of the horses, to give way in turn to one or more groups of fleeing enemies who are the special target of the king's arrows. As they flee, some have their faces turned toward the pursuing Pharaoh and raise their hands in supplication to him (Fig. 9). The attention of the figures in that portion of the scene is entirely devoted to him and to their efforts to escape him. Thus the whole upper portion of the relief constitutes the special area of the king's activity. Only in the middle and lower parts do the Egyptian forces participate in the action. The eye is carried straight from the monarch to his personal achievement, he and his particular victims being separated from the more general conflict.

Below the section devoted especially to the king's prowess, the main battle is depicted. Both here and in that portion of the field

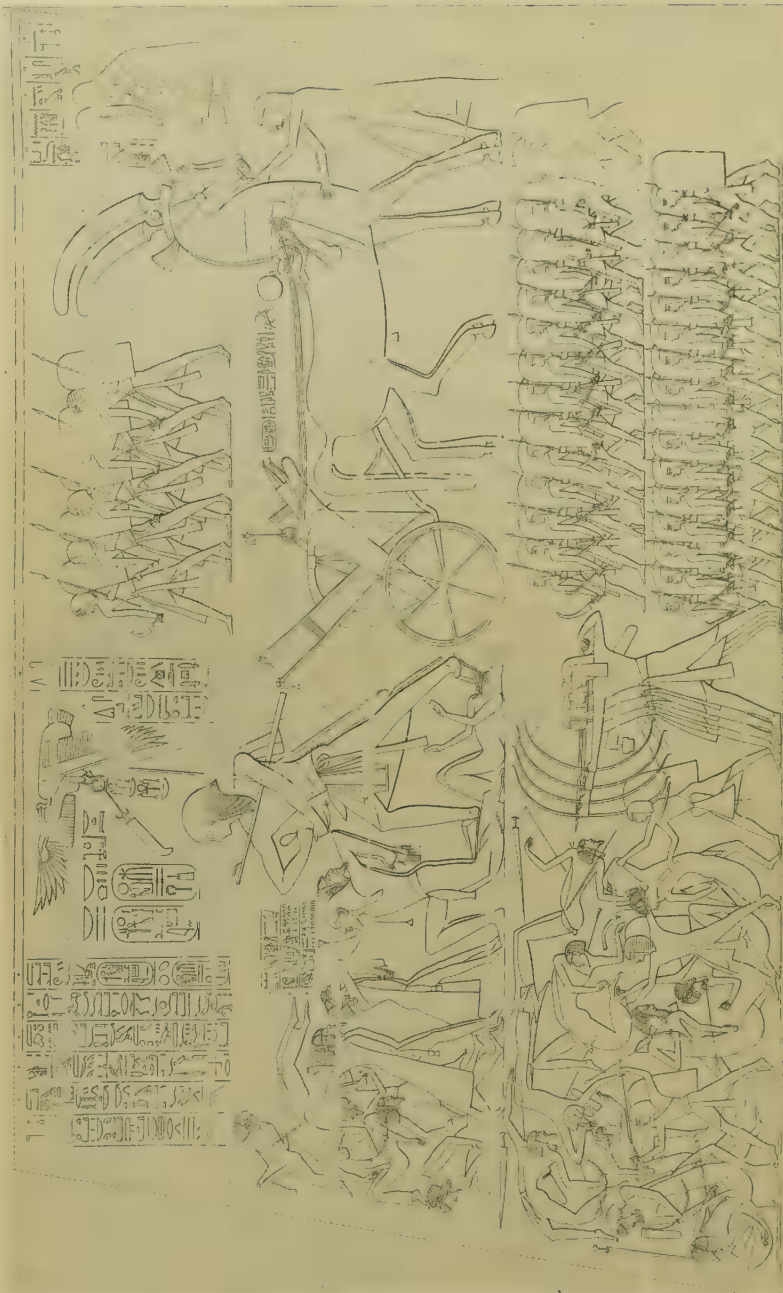


FIG. 12.—RAMSES III TAKING CAPTIVE THE LIBYAN CHIEF

This scene is interesting especially for the grouping of the figures, the accommodation of the bodies of the dead to the vacant areas, and the use of the Libyan swords as stop-gaps.

above in which those of the enemy still capable of flight appear, the survival of the old system of registration can be plainly seen. This part of the picture corresponds to the secondary or explanatory portion in the earlier reliefs. Here are seen the minor characters, the Egyptian troops and their opponents. They are broken up into groups, a small unit of the former attacking a corresponding group of the latter, or a series of single combats. This area, as far as the figures of the living are concerned, is composed of a number of self-contained vignettes, each complete in itself and having practically no relation to its neighbors (cf. Fig. 13). They merely give a series of hand-to-hand combats, with no suggestion of any comprehensive strategy. They are selective, showing various elements of the army in various modes of action.

Although these battle pieces are so closely linked with the earlier reliefs in the mechanics of their construction, yet they differ in one essential respect. In the Old and Middle Kingdom reliefs there is no effort to establish any unity among the various registers, no attempt to arrange them in any order of place or subject which might indicate that the artist conceived of them as constituting a bird's-eye view. In the Medinet Habu battle pieces, on the other hand, the various parts of the picture are related closely to one another and are clearly arranged so as to conform to a certain unity. Though remnants of registers survive, their rigidity has been broken through. The ancient base lines have largely disappeared, probably because the artist felt that the disorder of the battlefield was inadequately represented thereby and that, by failing to observe this time-honored usage, a greater unity could be obtained. He was attempting a bird's-eye view, but in the absence of any perspective he still clung to the fundamentals of the older principles.¹ Figure 13² not only preserves the general system of registration but retains the use of ground lines below the royal chariot and the ox carts, perhaps in the case of the latter because their ponderous and lumbering character demanded some solid base on which to rest. Indeed, in other scenes such ground lines may have been

¹ *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 9, clearly shows the remnants of four registers, each about the height of one of the standing figures. Plate 18 has, at the left, five distinct registers, though registration is almost entirely lacking on the companion piece, Plate 19.

² Taken from *ibid.*, Pl. 32.

added in paint and thus been used more extensively than the naked sculpture would lead us to believe.¹

On the other hand, while in Figure 13 the older registration survives, the effort to break away from it which produced the landscape of the hunting scenes appears to have actuated the artist. Just as in the latter the irregularities of the desert supersede the conventional parallel base lines, so here in the battle with the migrating hordes of the Sea Peoples the artist seems to be trying to picture a conflict in hilly or rolling country such as the Egyptians encountered when defending their Asiatic frontier against the northern invaders. By substituting animals for human figures in this relief, a fair picture of a late Middle Kingdom hunting scene would be easily secured.

Figure 14 gives the scene drawn in full on Figure 8, but with only the living indicated and the dead eliminated. Its registration is apparent. The unity and orderly arrangement of the left side of the piece is in marked contrast to the isolated groups at the right. The elimination of the figures of the dead shows at once the device employed by the artist in the development of these Medinet Habu battle scenes. He has effected the transition between the remnants of the older registration not by a rearrangement of the figures of the living, which seldom overlap one another perpendicularly, but by the wounded and the dead, who lie upon the ground and seem to have, in general, no relation to the registration. They are often intertwined in the most extraordinary manner; but, though they frequently overlap one another, they almost never obscure more than the lower legs of the standing figures. They are bent and twisted to accommodate them to the available space and to fill the gaps in the composition. They extend without order over the whole area of the conflict and constitute the one unifying element of the sculptor's work. In that portion of the scene where there are no prostrate figures, as on the left in Figure 14, the customary rigid registration has been retained. The bird's-eye view was used only for the actual conflict. Where troops are on the march or drawn up at attention, there the older artistic principles still controlled, principles supremely suited to produce the rhythmic effect so dear to the Egyptian draftsman. On the actual battle ground, in respect to the dead and dying, rhythm was conspicuously absent. It

¹ Cf. Schaefer, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-7.

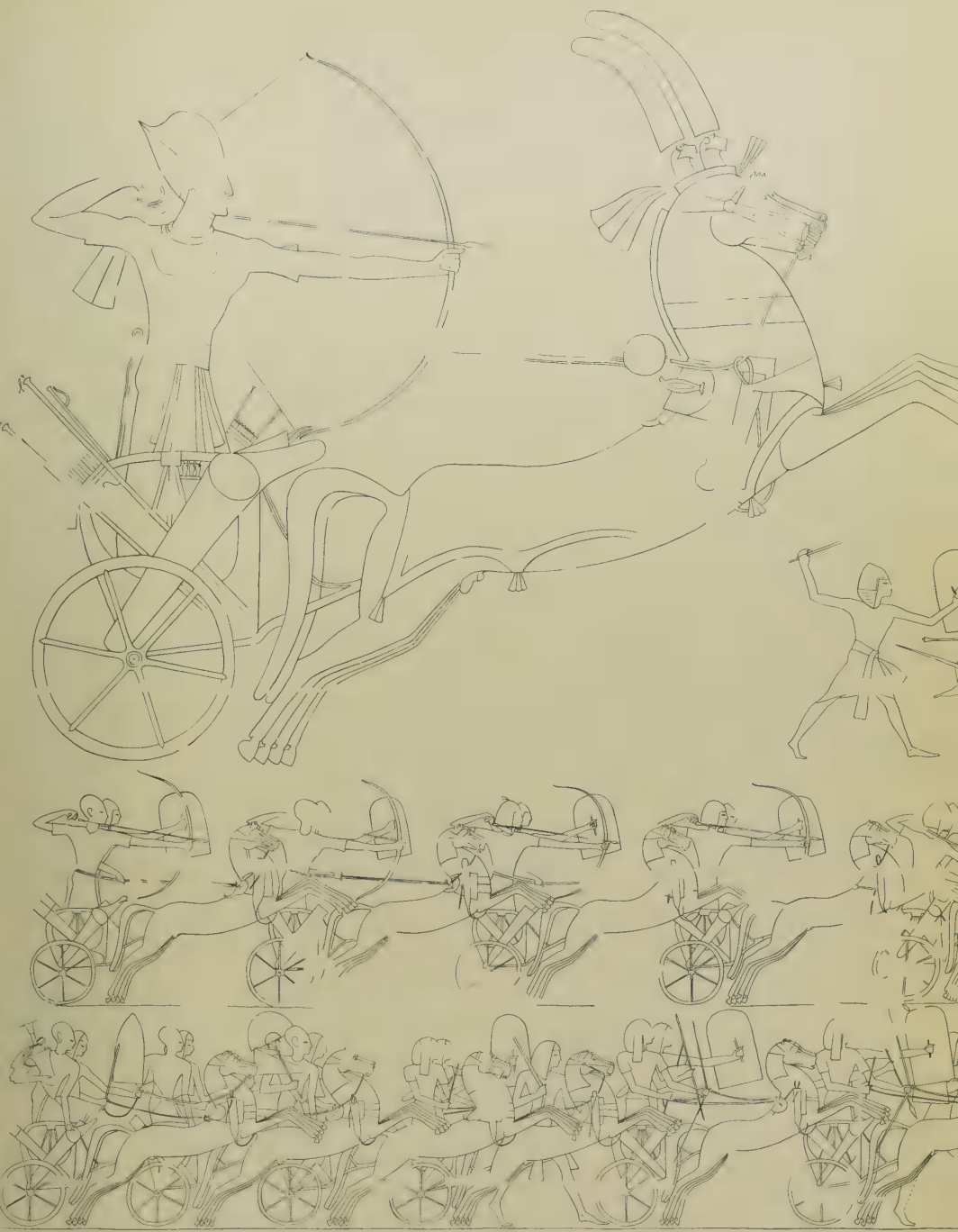
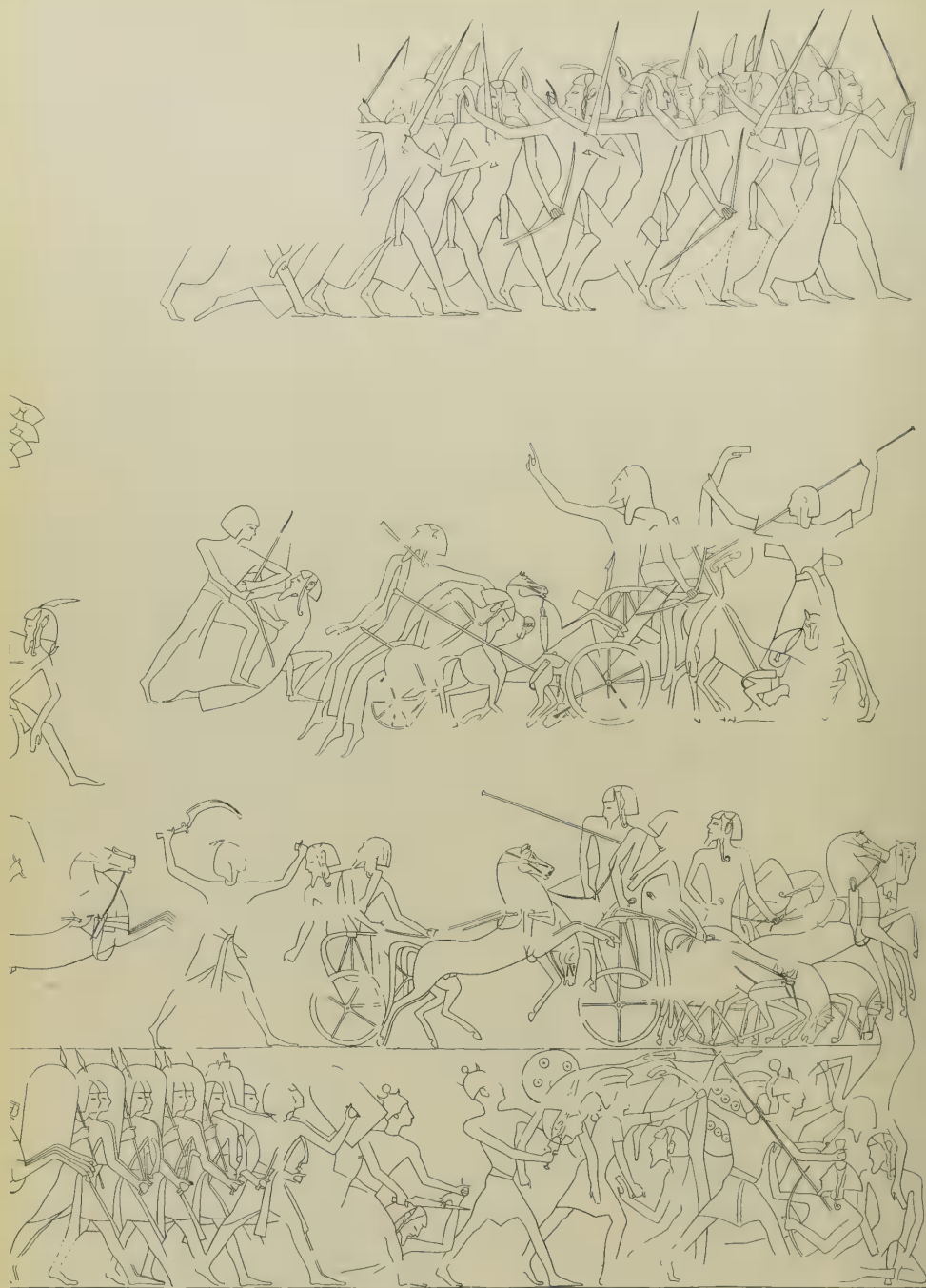


FIG. 14.—THE FIGURES OF THE LIVING P



THE SCENE SHOWN IN FIGURE 8

might survive in the case of small units of the infantry on either side scattered about the field, but to convey the disorder of the corpses the old methods were abandoned and new ones were tried which were not allowed time to be further worked out before the sacerdotal conservatism of the 21st dynasty laid its dead hand upon Egyptian art.¹

TRIUMPHS AFTER BATTLE

The triumphal celebration of the second victory over the Libyans is twice recorded at Medinet Habu, once on the north wall outside and again as a companion piece to the battle scene on the west face of the first pylon. The former is a sketchy affair, but the latter is one of the finest reliefs at the temple and has been often reproduced (Fig. 15). The king towers aloft in his reviewing-stand or window of royal appearances—its nature is somewhat uncertain—and harangues his court, while prisoners, trophies, and spoil of the battle are brought before him and listed by the scribes according to the usual methodical Egyptian custom.² Behind the king are two sunshade-bearers, beside him the court bailiffs and the monarch's personal attendants, and before him his eldest son and the two viziers. The actual audience which the monarch addressed was, of course, much more numerous; but the artist has given only a selected representative group. The captive Meshwesh chief and some of his followers are led up handcuffed, apparently not very securely, for one has withdrawn his hand from his bonds to raise it in salutation to the victor. Before the Egyptian officers who lead the prisoners forward are recorded the words they utter—the usual formula of acclamation addressed to the Pharaoh on occasions of public congratulation. Samples of the booty taken

¹ Erman, *op. cit.*, pp. 492-93.

² The British Museum possesses an ostrakon, No. 5620 (see its *Inscriptions in the Hieratic and Demotic Character* [London, 1868], Pl. I), which is probably a sketchy copy of a scene from the reign of Ramses II, not unlikely from the Ramesseum, from which original this relief of Ramses III is plainly derived. The ostrakon shows Ramses II in his window of royal appearances, while before him stand a prince and one of the viziers. Not only did Ramses III's artists copy the relief but, with the omission of a few lines, probably due to limitations of space, they repeated almost verbatim Ramses II's inscription accompanying the relief. In this instance the copying extended to such minutiae as the form of the determinative to the word for "vizier," a little squatting figure with a broad cape and no arms, which appears in column 2 of the ostrakon and in line 5 of the relief in Figure 15.

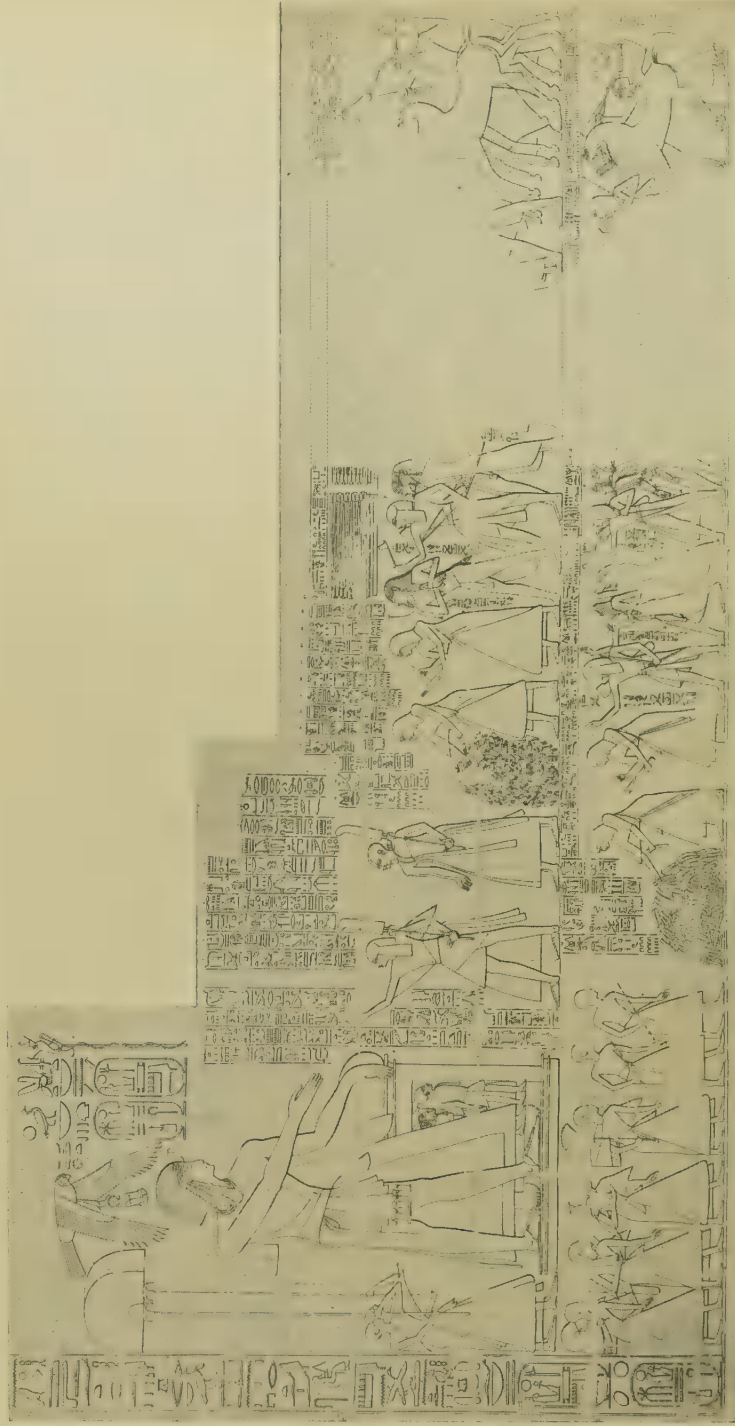


FIG. 15.—RAMSES III CELEBRATING HIS VICTORY OVER THE LIBYANS

This relief was sadly injured by fires built against it when the temple was a dwelling-place for the inhabitants of the Coptic town of Jeme. The figure of the captive Libyan chief in the upper register is one of the finest at Medinet Habu.

are shown in the form of horses and chariots and piles of swords, these last, if we are to believe the record, of the incredible length of three and four cubits. The latter figure is a modification of an original five which even the Egyptian's taste for tall statements could not induce him to swallow.

These triumphal reviews of the spoils of war were a regular part of every campaign. They might be held on the battlefield, as Thutmose III celebrated his victory after Megiddo. The annals of that king, after recounting the defeat of the enemy, go on to say: "They (the Egyptian army) brought up the booty which they had taken, consisting of hands, of living prisoners, of horses, (and of) chariots of gold and silver. . . . [Then his majesty com]manded his army, saying"¹ Here plainly we have an account of just such a scene as those depicted at Medinet Habu, the review of the spoil and the harangue of the king. It might almost be a description of the relief shown in Figure 15. Plainly the celebration in Thutmose III's case was held on the field of battle, not in a building nor on the return to Egypt. In presiding at the ceremony Thutmose perhaps seated himself in his chariot, as did Ramses III after his first victory over the Libyans.²

On the other hand, Merneptah's review of the spoil of his Libyan campaign was held at some royal palace, most likely at Memphis, in the forecourt of the great temple of Ptah, which was also the courtyard of the adjacent palace. In his Karnak inscription the king states: "[Then returned] the captains of archers, the infantry and chariotry, . . . [driving] before them asses laden with the uncircumcised phalli of the country of Libya, together with the hands of every country that was with them." After some breaks in the inscription come the words, "as tribute under the window (of royal appearances), to cause his majesty to see his conquests." A few lines farther on the inscription narrates that "their lord the king appeared in the 'broad hall' of the palace, while [the court acclaimed] his majesty, rejoicing at his appearance which he made. The servants [of his majesty] exulted to heaven; the suite on both sides. . . ." Merneptah, it seems, held his review in traditional style, after the manner of scenes so often shown in the reliefs, appearing in the great window, below which were

¹ Cf. *Urkunden des äg. Altertums*, IV, 659-60.

² Cf. *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 23.

piled the trophies and spoil, and before which were gathered the court and the more important prisoners, while the monarch addressed the assembly, frequently interrupted, no doubt, by shouts and acclamations from the crowd.

It is possible that such ceremonies of victory were held in more than one of the great cities, so as to impress the people with the royal power. The Empire rulers paid homage especially to Amon, and to Thebes ultimately came the larger share of the spoil. There too the chief celebration undoubtedly took place. In a paean of praise to Ramses II and his capital an ancient scribe writes: "How pleasant it is when thou goest to Thebes and thy chariot is weighed down with hands. The chieftains go bound in front of thee, and thou wilt present them to thy august father Amon."¹

These scenes in which the Pharaoh addresses his followers occur eight times at Medinet Habu. In one instance² the king sits in his chariot as he conducts the celebration. This is a stereotyped scene copied from earlier reliefs. On two occasions he is shown standing on a group of his enemies as he declaims on his own prowess. The presence of the captive foe beneath the king's feet may be pure symbolism, but it is quite within the range of possibility that they did so serve to grace the royal triumph. In most instances at Medinet Habu Ramses III stands on a platform surrounded by a balustrade on which rests a pillow or cushion. On the cushion the king leans with his left arm while he gesticulates with his right. Behind him sometimes appear his chariot and horses, while occasionally a crenelated fortress occupies the corner of the scene, serving to localize the event at some particular spot. But there are other instances in which the Pharaoh stands on the platform with no accessories that in any way indicate the circumstances of the action. Among these latter is the scene of Figure 15.³

¹ Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians* (transl. by A. M. Blackman), pp. 272-73 (from Papyrus Anastasi II).

² *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 23.

³ In the war reliefs of the 19th dynasty the Pharaoh is not represented as holding his review of spoils at such a window. Seti I has no scenes of victory, and Ramses II stands erect on his prostrate enemies (Luxor, in Wreszinski, *Atlas*. II. Teil, Taf. 73; Beit el-Wali, *ibid.*, Taf. 163a) or sits within a shrine as a god (Beit el-Wali, *ibid.*, Taf. 164a, 167) or sits in his chariot on the battlefield (Abu Simbel, *ibid.*, Taf. 171; Abydos, *ibid.*, Taf. 24). Have we at Medinet Habu a later custom

That these triumphs preceded the return to the capital is indicated by the sequence of the reliefs, for everywhere at Medinet Habu the homeward march follows immediately after the celebration of victory. It would seem, then, that the review might take place either directly after the battle and on the field itself, or at one or another of the royal residences and before the window of royal appearances. It might occur at some distance from Thebes; but the culmination of the campaign, which had been conducted with the blessing of Amon, would be the triumphal entry into Thebes and the presentation of the prisoners and spoil before the god. Undoubtedly another gathering before the window took place at Thebes also, and here the trophies from the bodies of the slain might again be in evidence.¹

It is interesting to note that, while the king is represented as drawing his bow with either hand according as he faces right or left, the Medinet Habu artists have been careful always to depict him in these triumphal scenes as leaning on his *left* arm and emphasizing his address with his *right* hand. In order, however, that his figure may not be obscured, the sculptor has presented the Pharaoh as if standing outside the nearer balustrade of the platform. To a modern eye this arrangement leads to extraordinary results. In Figure 16, for example, the left arm of the king, though bent in the position it would assume were it resting on the cushion, yet finds itself apparently resting merely on air, while the pillow, transferred to the right side of the royal figure along with the balustrade, seemingly interferes with the free movement of the right arm. To the modern this seems ludicrous, but the Egyptian regarded it as quite natural. He had given all the facts of the situation—the bent left arm, the extended right obviously in the act of reinforcing the royal words, the nearer side of the balus-

according to which the celebration was postponed till some royal residence with its window of appearances was reached; or has the Egyptian artist, who frequently saw his sovereign at the palace window and heard him address his court therefrom, merely drawn the king in this familiar situation without reference to the real facts of the case?

¹ What ultimately became of these gruesome trophies is not known. By the time they had been carried from the Delta or Asia to Thebes on the backs of donkeys or in chariots, they must, one would think, have been anything but the "pleasant" subject of poetic attention which the writer of Papyrus Anastasi II considered them to have been. Amenhotep II hung the severed hands from his Asiatic campaign on the walls of Thebes, a not unlikely destination for all such trophies.

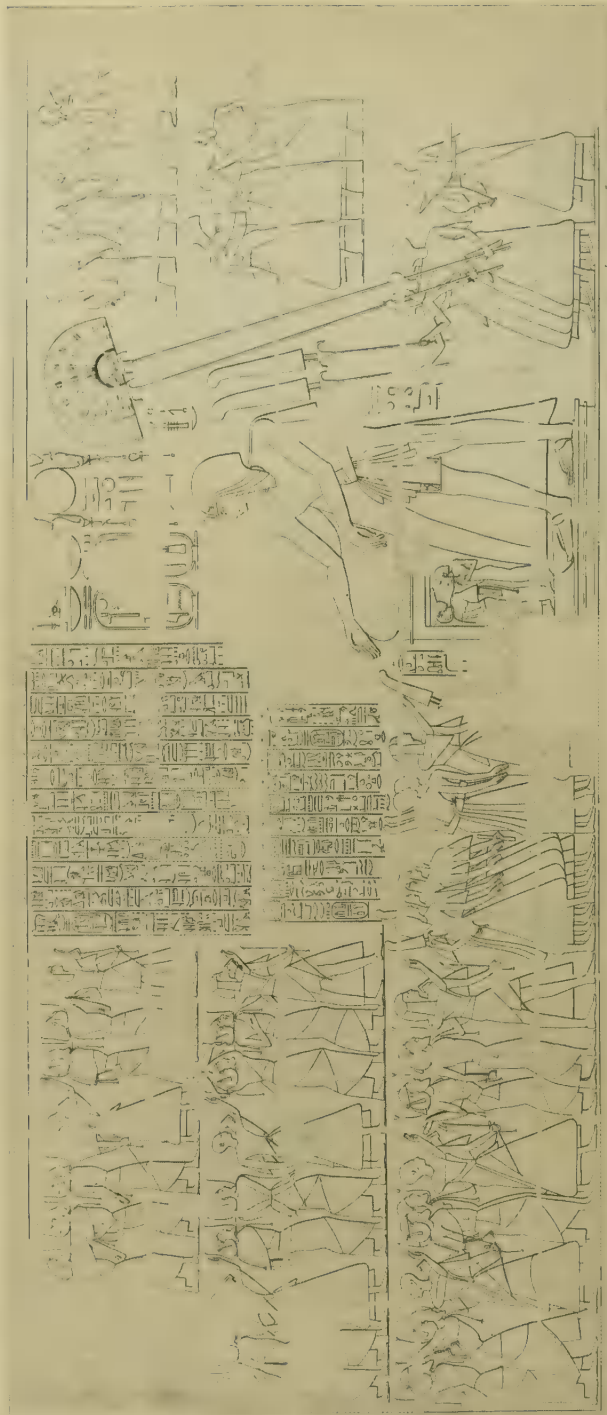


FIG. 16.—RAMSES III CELEBRATING HIS VICTORY OVER THE SYRIANS

The king, clad in the mantle worn on ceremonial occasions, stands in the window of royal appearances with his personal attendants behind him and the chief members of his court before him. The captains of the army lead up Syrian prisoners while the monarch harangues his followers (his words are recorded in the upper of the two inscriptions) and the courtiers reply with flattering eulogies (in the bottom inscription).

trade (or possibly its front) with the cushion upon it. What more could be needed? The exact relation of these facts had to be modified because of his reluctance to obscure the figure of the king by placing the balustrade between the Pharaoh and the beholder. But the artist's treatment of the subject satisfied all the demands of good Egyptian art, which was concerned not so much with things as they seem, that is, with a point of view, as with things as they are, that is, with what is known to be present in its proper relation to the artist's theme.

THE SYRIAN WARS

The wars in Asia are shown in two series of reliefs, one on the outside and one within on the north wall of the first court of the temple. Whether they have to do with the same campaign or with different wars it is impossible to say. Ramses III laid no particular emphasis on his undertakings in Asia other than his defeat of the Sea Peoples in the year 8. The inscription of the year 5¹ speaks of troubles in Syria apparently occasioned by the invasion of Syria-Palestine by the northerners. As a result of the disturbed conditions in their own land, many of the Syrians seem to have sought refuge in Egypt, where they hoped for a more peaceful existence, though one of exile. When the invaders had been beaten back from the borders of Egypt in the year 8, it is possible that Ramses III set about the reorganization of some of the provinces in Asia that had been disturbed by the presence of the invaders. These Syrian reliefs may be a vague record of this enterprise. But the inscriptions accompanying the reliefs are too general in content to give us any data upon which to build. That the Pharaoh campaigned in Asia seems certain; what he accomplished is unknown.

If we may trust the reliefs themselves, Ramses penetrated far into the north of Syria to the confines of the Hittite regions of Asia Minor, then desolated by the invasions from the north that had driven the Sea Peoples into Syria-Palestine. The series of reliefs on the outside of the north wall begins with the siege of two fortresses manned by unmistakably Hittite garrisons (Fig. 17). One of these structures still bears the name of Arzawa, but the name of the other is lost. The whole scene is in the approved traditional style, belonging plainly to the series that has survived from the 19th dynasty at Karnak. That

¹ *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, P's. 27 and 28.

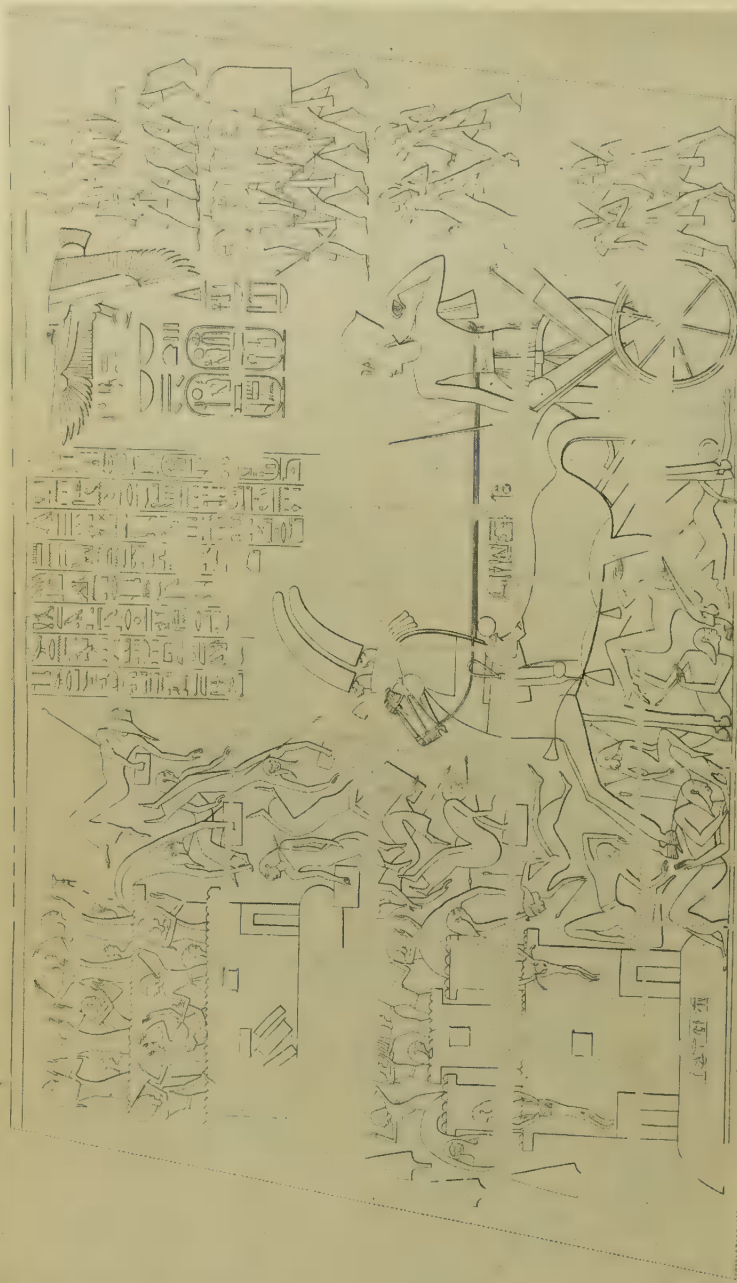


FIG. 17.—**RAMSES III ATTACKING TWO HITTITE TOWNS**

The king stands in his chariot, his horses advancing at a stately pace instead of in the headlong charge usual in battle scenes. The Pharaoh, having just discharged his arrow, has lowered his bow while he watches the flight of the missile. So absorbed is he that his left hand still remains in the position it assumed as he released the string. The Hittite fortresses are already in the hands of the Egyptians, who are engaged in completing the discomfiture of the garrisons. Dead Hittite fortresses are already in the hands or pour themselves over the ramparts in the spineless manner in which Egyptian art seems to have depicted such attitudes. Some of the enemy hold aloft flaming braziers, probably as tokens of homage or surrender, or hand young children over the parapets as peace offerings, a regular practice under such circumstances if we may trust the reliefs. The doors of the upper fortress fall from their pivots. Altogether it is a scene of as complete demoralization as the Egyptian artist could well produce.

Ramses III ever reached the Hittite district of Arzawa and laid siege to the town of that name is difficult to believe. Other monarchs before him had done so and had recorded the achievement on their monuments. Ramses III also must include in his records such an event. The same conclusion is probably true of the next relief in the series, the siege and capture of "Tunip of the land of Kheta" (Fig. 18). This is an extremely interesting composition with some striking details. The king in his chariot, with uplifted sword, has grasped the Syrian chief by the hair and seems about to dispatch him. The Pharaoh's attitude, with one leg thrown over the front of his chariot and his foot resting on the tongue, thus giving him greater freedom of action, is not uncommon in battle and hunting scenes¹ and is probably drawn from life. The *mêlée* of battle before him is vigorous, not too confused, more successful as a composition than many such pieces. But the chief interest of the relief centers on the town and its besiegers.

According to the evidence here given, Tunip was a walled town protected by a moat or stream (Fig. 19). Before it the Sherden advance, apparently to prevent any attempt on the part of the inhabitants to escape. In scenes depicting the sieges of towns this was regularly the rôle of the Sherden. They do not seem to have been used for the more immediate attack on the walls. The scaling of the fortress, which must have been the more hazardous part of the operations, was, if we can trust the reliefs, always left for the native Egyptian troops. Was it that the Sherden were not skilled in the necessary methods of attack, or is their absence to be ascribed to the same reason that deprived them of a part in the representations of the triumphal celebrations of victory?² Perhaps in these records, which were to perpetuate for "millions of years" the story of the Pharaoh's triumph, the foreign contingents were intentionally omitted where the greatest honors were to be recorded. Perhaps in actual fact, just as in battle they seem regularly to have been sent forward in advance to clear the way for the Egyptian forces, so they would bear the brunt of the attack on the walled towns, while the Egyptian troops followed to reap the harvest of victory.

Before the town is a group of four figures, bowmen clad in pointed

¹ Cf. Fig. 26.

² See *Medinet Habu*, I, 4, n. 24.

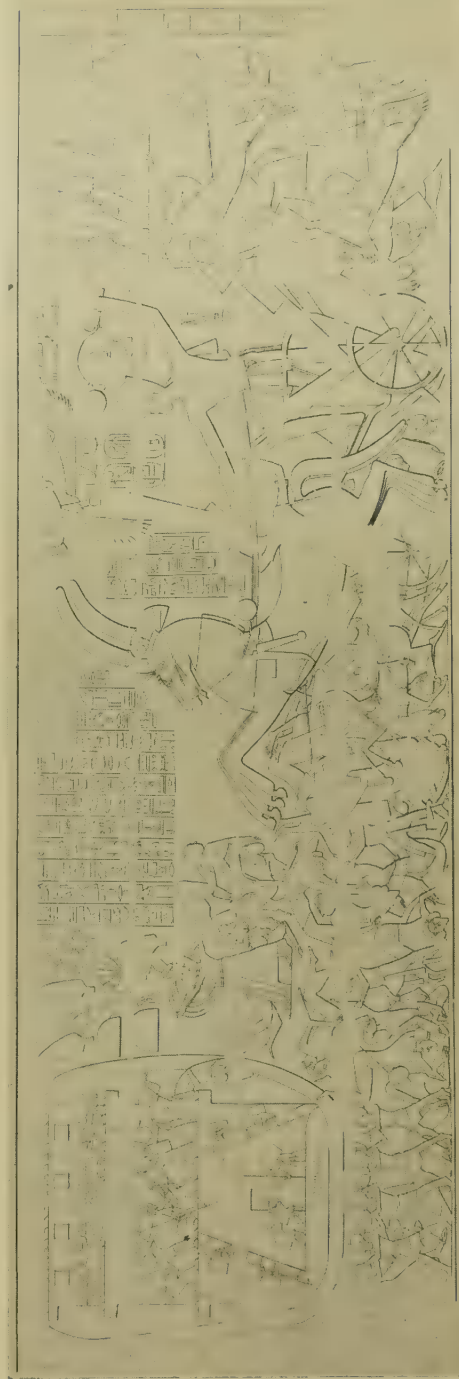


FIG. 18.—RAMSES III ATTACKING THE CITY OF TUNIP

helmets and long enveloping garments.¹ Three Egyptians are engaged in battering in the gates of the fortress, while others are scaling the walls by means of ladders. Here the artist has become a little involved, for not only has he placed two men one on either side of the same ladder, but he has so confused their positions that one of them has one arm and one leg on the front of the ladder and the other arm and other leg on the back. It is a good example of the Egyptian's carelessness in such matters. The town is already practically captured, for an Egyptian trumpeter blows a flourish from the walls, and a standard-bearer beside him has planted the regimental ensign on the captured fortress. Not the least interesting part of the scene is that depicting the besieging Egyptians destroying the groves of trees about the town. It reminds us of the passage in the annals of Thutmose III where, in recounting the siege of Megiddo, the record reads: "They measured [this] city, surrounded with an inclosure, walled about with green timber of all their pleasant trees." Or again: "Behold, his majesty overthrew the city of Arvad, with its grain, cutting down all its pleasant trees." Of Kadesh, Thutmose records that he "overthrew it, cut down its groves, harvested its grain." The destruction of the fruit groves surrounding the Syrian towns was a regular part of the attack upon one of their fortified places.

On the north wall of the first court is a scene giving the siege of an Amorite town the name of which is lost, if it was ever recorded. The fortress is drawn in greater detail than elsewhere at Medinet Habu (Fig. 20), but the details of attack present in the siege of Tunip are lacking. There are some very fine heads among the Syrian garrison, while they seem to be prepared for a stouter defense than is usual in

¹ These are probably the royal princes, who frequently occupy this position in the Medinet Habu reliefs. Cf. *ibid.*, Pl. 37; this article, Fig. 12; and Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Taf. 146 (= *M.H.*, Vol. II, Pl. 94). A group with apparently the same pointed helmets is shown *ibid.*, Vol. I, Pl. 18, just below the forelegs of the king's horses, and in one or two other places in the same relief. This is probably the usual Egyptian helmet, but drawn in these cases a little differently from the form in which it is elsewhere represented. Wreszinski, *op. cit.*, Taf. 62b, a Libyan battle relief of Ramses III's in his little temple in the Mut compound at Karnak, has several figures so clad. Rosellini, *op. cit.*, Pl. CVI, a Kadesh relief from Abu Simbel, contains several figures wearing such garments; but, in part at least, the drawing is misleading owing to faulty work by the copyist, who has mistaken the long shaven heads of some of the king's immediate companions for pointed helmets such as are shown in our Figure 18.

these 20th dynasty reliefs. Captives being brought back ostensibly from the Syrian wars are shown in Figure 21.

NON-MILITARY SCENES

Not the least interesting of the subjects recorded has been the façade of the palace on the south side of the first court. Something



FIG. 19.—THE CITY OF TUNIP ATTACKED BY THE EGYPTIANS

A detail from the scene shown in Figure 18. Here, as in Figure 17, the Egyptians are already in practical possession of the town. Behind the Egyptian trumpeter is a standard-bearer. The pole of his standard still survives, but of the object itself only the top of the feather which surmounted it can now be seen on the stone above. A Syrian on the upper wall is suspending a child over the ramparts. The feet of the unfortunate remain in front of the head of the Egyptian below. In the upper right corner of the scene the Egyptians are carrying out the destruction of the groves surrounding the city. Three men are engaged in felling trees, possibly olives. Two others are apparently setting fire to heaps of grain, though the convincing details which may have originally appeared in color are now lacking. The artist has also shown a grape vine and a pomegranate. He seems to have intended to include the chief products of Syrian agriculture.

has already been said about the scene that occupies the left third of the wall (Fig. 2). The central section (Fig. 22) is one of the most decorative compositions in Egypt, though it is now in a sadly muti-



FIG. 20.—A FORTRESS OF THE LAND OF AMOR

The garrison of this town is less demoralized, more ready to defend itself, than is usual in Ramses III's reliefs. One would judge that the attack had barely begun, yet signs of dismay are already visible among the defenders. A high pole with a large banner surmounts the fortress (cf. W. Max Müller, *Egyptological Researches*, II [Washington, D.C., 1910], 158-59). The two arrows at the top of the pole are presumably the result of the king's archery, to judge from analogous representations at the Ramesseum and Luxor temples. The modeling of the faces of the Syrians is more carefully done and more highly successful than is usually the case at Medinet Habu.

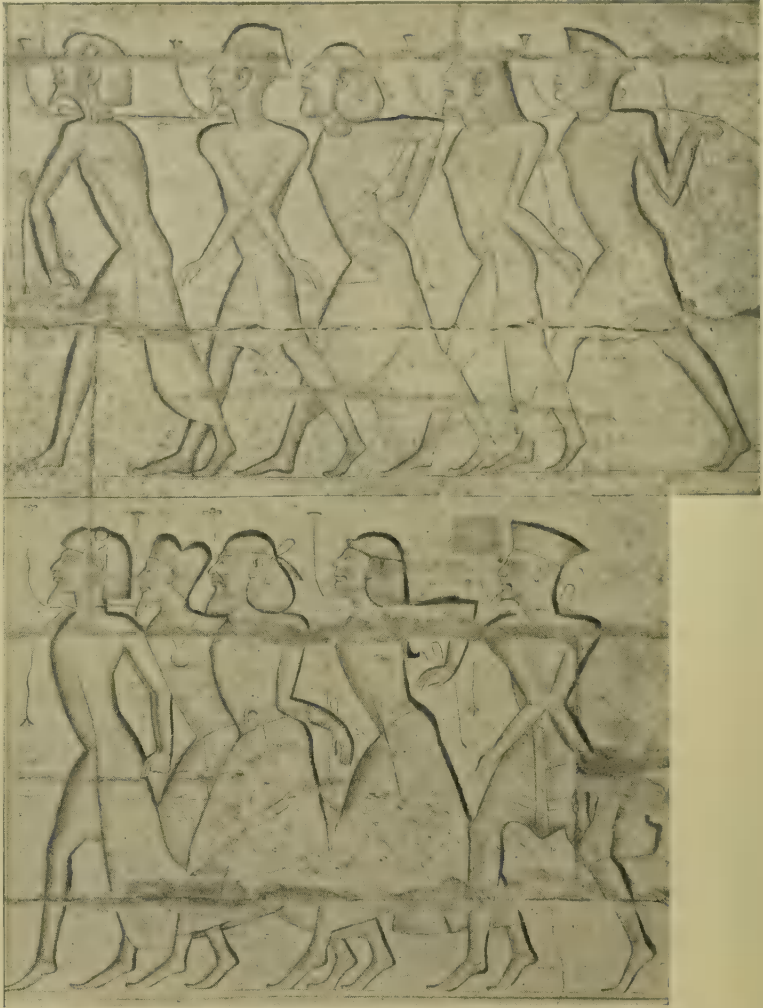


FIG. 21.—CAPTIVE FOREIGNERS DRIVEN BEFORE THE KING'S CHARIOT

These groups are highly selective, containing representatives of most of the nations with whom the Egyptians warred, except the negro tribes. Libyans, South Palestinians, Syrians, Hittites, and members of the Sea Peoples are included. The choice of figures is probably intended to symbolize the wide victories of the king rather than to form a sober record of the captives from any one campaign.



FIG. 22.—DECORATIONS SURROUNDING THE WINDOW OF ROYAL APPEARANCES

In spite of its present mutilated condition, this is a very fine composition. The heads set in a row below the king's feet represent the foreign peoples against whom the Egyptians campaigned in the incessant wars of the period. Originally they extended completely across below the window.

lated condition, due to changes during the reign of Ramses III and also to the fact that this wall formed one side of the later Coptic houses that were built under the colonnade. The center of the area is occupied by the opening of the window of royal appearances, from which the Pharaoh was wont to view the spoils of victory, also various games and festivities, and to extend rewards and favors to those whom he delighted to honor. A row of heads of typical foreign peoples once extended entirely across the middle portion of the wall below the window. Of these heads only seven remain *in situ*, seven more were hacked off by Ramses III when the window was enlarged during the latter part of his reign, and the rest were removed and re-used in later construction whence Hölscher has since recovered them. The design furnishes one of the most striking illustrations of the oft recurring phrase uttered by the god to the king, "I have placed all lands together under thy sandals," or, in the words of the Hebrew prophet, "I have made thine enemies thy footstool." The Egyptian use of balanced decorative elements clustered symmetrically around some central point, in this case the window, is shown in remarkable completeness.

Below the window, and forming the lowest register of the whole wall, a relief for which no parallel is known (Fig. 23) shows sports and games between Egyptians and captive(?) foreigners being viewed by the Pharaoh, his court, and foreign ambassadors of neighboring states. That such events actually took place in the court before the window, and at other residences of the monarch, we cannot doubt. The inscription of the year 8 states: "The travelers and messengers who behold him over Egypt are bowed and bent before him. They say daily: Montu in his real form is he who is over Egypt."¹ Figure 23 shows just such "travelers and messengers" present at the games. In a model letter to a Nubian princeling an Egyptian official is made to say: "Be mindful of the day when the tribute is brought, when thou passest before the king beneath the window, and the counselors are ranged on either side in front of his majesty, and the chiefs and envoys of all lands stand there marveling and viewing the tribute."² Substitute "games" for "tribute" in the foregoing quotation, and it would serve as an exact description of the scene before us.

¹ *Medinet Habu*, Vol. I, Pl. 46, line 6.

² Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 208.



FIG. 23.—MEMBERS OF THE COURT AND FOREIGN AMBASSADORS VIEWING THE SPORTS BEFORE THE WINDOW OF ROYAL APPEARANCES

Wrestling and singletick were favorite sports with the Egyptians. In this scene the Egyptians contend with foreigners as the Pharaoh and the court look on. Such contests as this undoubtedly took place in the court before the window. The short inscriptions above and before the contestants give the words of the actors in the scene. Thus the Egyptian wrestler on the left addresses his Nubian opponent: "Woe to thee, thou negro enemy! I make thee take a fall, helpless, in the presence of Pharaoh." The singletick fighter in the center right calls out to his adversary: "Stand fast and I will make thee see the hand of a warrior!" The foremost of the spectators on the right is a royal prince. The inscription before him, carved during Ramses III's reign, reads: "King's son, commander in chief of the army," followed by a blank space for the later insertion of the name. The name, however, was apparently not carved during Ramses III's day, but someone placed the prince's name in the lacuna after both Ramses III and the prince were dead; for the inserted name reads, "Ramses, deceased," and furthermore a uraeus has been added to the forehead of the figure. Both name and uraeus are lightly carved. It would seem that the prince had actually ascended the throne after Ramses III's death and had then died in his turn before the lacuna was filled. When the inscriptions on the temple wall were first carved, blank spaces were left here and there for the later addition of names of members of the royal family. However, no such names, other than those of the Pharaoh himself, are contemporary with Ramses III, but wherever they occur were apparently added later. We know that toward the end of the Pharaoh's reign a conspiracy against his life was hatched in the harem and that the queen and one or more of the royal princes were involved. Had the king already, at the time the temple was first decorated, premonitions of such treachery within the family which induced him to omit their names from his temple records?

That the window of royal appearances was a necessary part of any palace we may be sure. It is constantly represented at Amarna, and traces of it have been found elsewhere at other sites, while it occurs in several paintings in the Theban tombs. Such a scene as this, probably almost identical with it, occurred at the Ramesseum on the palace front beneath the window; for the block at present placed by Daressy just below the window at Medinet Habu, though found by him elsewhere in this temple, came originally from the Ramesseum, as witnessed by the nature of the stone, the character of the carving, and a fragment of one of Ramses II's inscriptions still surviving upon it. Yet it fits remarkably well into its present position, and the portions of the two figures at either end of the stone are obviously to be completed as Ramses III's sculptors designed the corresponding figures at Medinet Habu.

The remaining third of the palace façade is shown in Figure 24. The Pharaoh is there reviewing his stud, the restive steeds held by their halters by the grooms of the royal stables while the inevitable trumpeter blows his instrument. Below the figure of the king appears a group of courtiers, a replica on a smaller scale of the group still surviving in the corresponding place on the façade of the palace at the Ramesseum (Fig. 25). Behind the king are his personal attendants, who play so conspicuous a part in many of the scenes at Medinet Habu. This is a well-balanced and very decorative scene. It must have been a gorgeous sight when the color was still preserved, when the two doorways on either side, now so severely mutilated, were still intact with their rich fayence inlay decorations, and when the doors themselves, overlaid with copper in beaten work or with gold leaf, still swung on their pivots. Ramses III need not have been ashamed of his work when he held his first public audience from the window of royal appearances in his new palace-temple at Medinet Habu.

One of the most imposing reliefs in Egypt is that of the king hunting wild bulls near the marshes of the river (Fig. 26). It is placed in a peculiarly favorable position to be viewed today, though originally it was obscured by the first palace and actually concealed by the second. It was this latter fact that undoubtedly preserved it from mutilation by deep gouges such as have elsewhere so greatly injured the



FIG. 24.—RAMSES III INSPECTING THE ROYAL STUD

The pharaohs seem to have been very proud of their horses. Ramses II declared, after the Battle of Kadesh, that the span that had stood him in such good stead in his moment of supreme danger, when he charged single-handed into the victorious Hittite hosts, should thenceforth be fed daily under his own eye. The royal stables are not infrequently mentioned in inscriptions. The horses' heads in this relief form a fine group, though much injured when the wall on which they appear was used as part of a Coptic house.

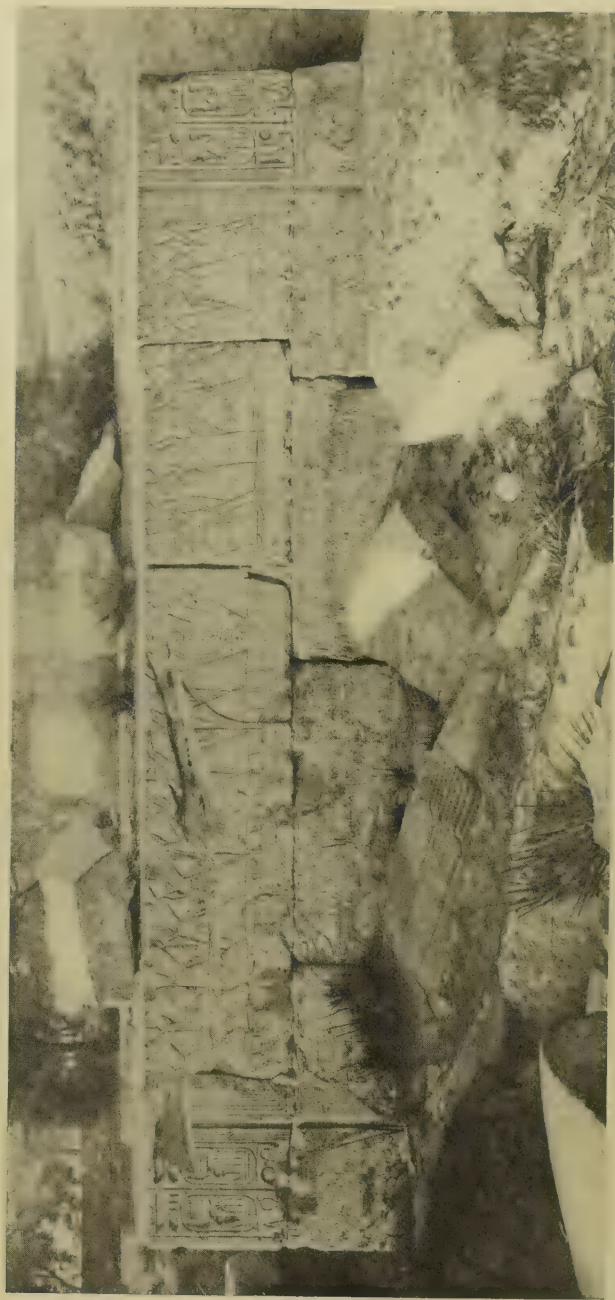


FIG. 25.—RAMSES II'S COURT

This figure shows the only remnant of relief from the façade of Ramses II's palace at the Ramesseum remaining *in situ*. A comparison with the group below the Pharaoh's feet in Figure 24 will show the similarity in arrangement of the two reliefs and support the contention that at the Ramesseum the south wall of the first court served as a pattern for the decoration of the corresponding wall at Medinet Habu. At the Ramesseum there are more individuals represented, since all the figures at that temple are drawn on a smaller scale than those at Medinet Habu and are therefore frequently more numerous within a given area.



FIG. 26.—RAMSES III HUNTING WILD BULLS

This scene is one of the masterpieces of Egyptian artistic composition. It is full of life and vigor. The huge figures of the wild cattle charging into the reed swamps by the river are magnificent creations. The artist has achieved in the handling of his subject a depth that is rarely seen in Egyptian reliefs, though it is doubtful whether in this instance it is the result of conscious effort. The fine swing of the marching men in the lower register adds greatly to the movement of the piece. This composition is surely the work of a master artist. Did he live under Ramses III or under one of his predecessors? One is never sure at Medinet Habu what is original composition of the 20th dynasty and what is mere imitation of earlier work. In any event, the sculptor who produced this relief was surely at least a skilled craftsman. Compare the desert hunt in Fig. 27.

outer walls of the temple.¹ No line drawing, we learned by experience, can possibly do justice to this work of art, for the life of the piece rests largely on the boldness of the carving, on the plastic elements. When drawn in outline only, the wild cattle seem scarcely worth while, and the flatness of such a drawing deprives the composition of one of its most remarkable characteristics, its depth, a rare element in Egyptian art. It was therefore decided not to reproduce this scene by the same method as that used for the reliefs in general, but to publish a retouched, or rather an emphasized, photograph, so as to give the effect produced when the afternoon sun falls aslant the wall and the animals and marching men seem to spring to life. There is no real addition or subtraction in this plate. It is a far closer approximation to the original than any mere photograph can be.² It is interesting that, when examined closely, this relief displays more corrections than almost any other in the temple. Practically every part of it has undergone change during the progress of the original work. In the first rendering, for instance, the long lance held by the Pharaoh extended far forward of its present position and pierced the flank of the bull at which it is

¹ In *M.H.*, I, 3, n. 21, I suggested that these grooves or gouges in the temple walls are the result of scrapings by the ancient villagers in order to secure sand from the stones of a building held in superstitious regard to be used as charms or medicine. I have since learned that this practice still persists at Karnak and Edfu (and undoubtedly at other sites also), where women especially resort to these temples today to scrape off the sand from the crumbling walls. The material thus gathered is placed within a wet cloth and bound over the eyes, being considered efficacious for certain diseases. That the marks are not the result of sharpening tools, as has been suggested, is apparent from their shape, for they practically never show a flat surface but present a continuous curve from the top to the bottom and from side to side. The edge of any instrument would be utterly ruined were it whetted on such a surface. I have been informed that there are analogous practices in connection with certain old churches in Europe.

² The usefulness of a photograph in checking the accuracy of a drawing has led one reviewer of our *OIC*, No. 5, on the earlier work of the Expedition, to express a desire that photographs, as well as drawings, of the reliefs should be published. In support of his opinion he suggests that Figure 17 of that "Communication," from a photograph, indicates a mistake in the drawing of the same scene as shown *ibid.*, Figure 18. A re-examination of the original on the temple wall shows that, as was suggested in the "Communication" reviewed, a photograph has again proved misleading and the photograph *plus* the eye of the artist has given the correct rendering of the ancient Egyptian's work. It is hoped that a reinforced photograph such as that shown here in Figure 26 may prove to be a still more reliable reproduction.



FIG. 27.—RAMSES III HUNTING DESERT GAME

The original of this figure was much obscured by wasps' nests, which abound in all the deeper cuttings. When the hard masonry of the insets was removed, the relief revealed proved of considerable interest and no small merit. The wild hares are perhaps the least successful of the artist's creations; but some of the figures of the larger animals, especially those of the asses in the lowest register, are well executed.



FIG. 28.—THE ENTRANCE TO THE WINDOW OF ROYAL APPEARANCES

This relief originally adorned the north wall of a hall in the royal palace. The roof of the hall was at first supported on four rows of columns (Hölscher in *OIC*, No. 5, Figs. 33 and 34). Later the hall was made more lofty, and for the four columns two were substituted. The king's monogram above his head and the two short inscriptions at either side of the top of the doorway mark the spots where the architraves of the first palace were set into the wall. When these architraves were removed at the reconstruction of the palace, blocks of stone were set into the recesses so created and were decorated as shown in the drawing. The whole device above the door was also altered to conform to the larger free area of the wall. This portion of the relief, therefore, shows extensive alterations. The remainder of the composition is very successful, though the artist has given the king two right hands and has certainly failed with the captives' arms where they hang across the shoulders of their comrades.

aimed. The later revision shortened the weapon to more natural proportions. It is only the protecting wall that was built against it during



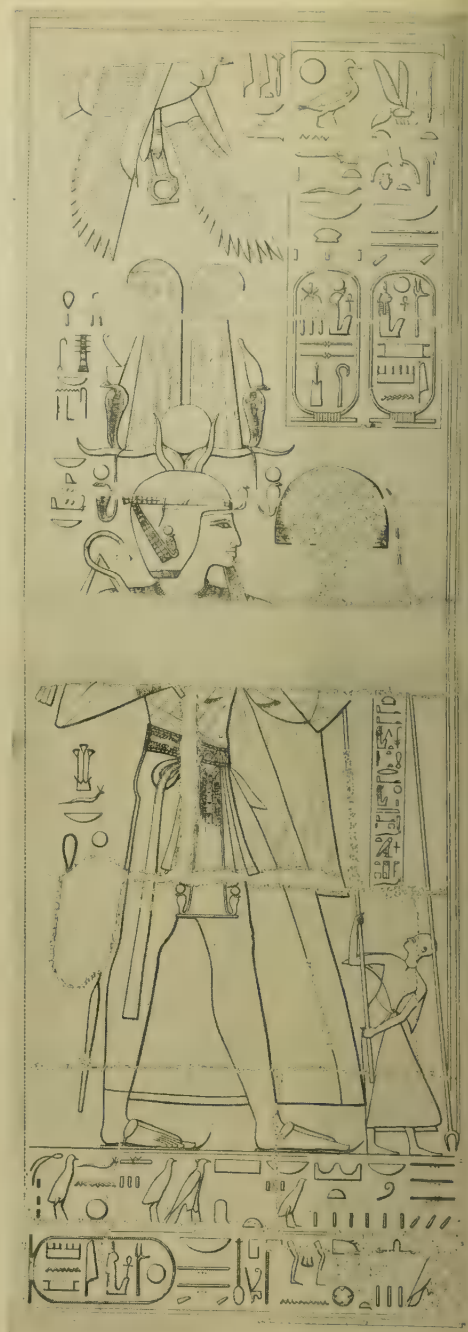
FIG. 29.—THE SOUTH COLONNADE OF THE FIRST COURT, LOOKING WEST

Ramses III's reign that has kept the correcting plaster in position and so preserved the beauty of the work.

Figure 28 shows the decoration surrounding the entrance to the window of royal appearances on the south or palace side. This was



a



b

FIG. 30.—THE PHARAOH ENTERING THE TEMPLE

The two panels at the ends of the north colonnade of the first court

subject to numerous changes when the second palace was built, but the general fine effect of the composition is not seriously marred. The two monograms of Ramses III between the vulture goddesses on

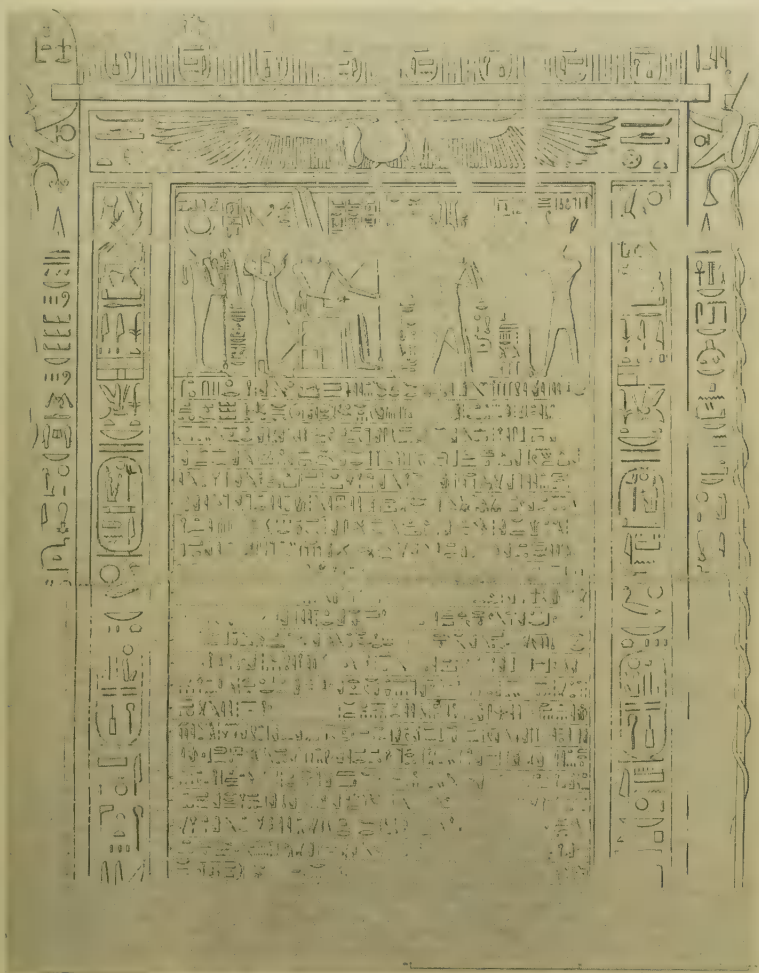


FIG. 31.—A STELA BY THE GATEWAY THROUGH THE FIRST PYLON

This is a badly preserved inscription, one of two in stela form carved at either side of the main entrance into the first court of the temple. It is dated in the twelfth year of Ramses III's reign and recounts the divine favors showered upon the Pharaoh. It reads much like one of the Hebrew psalms and is obviously a poetic composition, probably regarded as of considerable merit by its authors but only mildly impressive today.

either side above the royal figures were carved when the second palace was built, and belong to the later style of the reign, to that of the Fortified Gate rather than to that of the temple itself. Passing through the doorway and looking right and left from the window of royal appearances, we see the king, at either end of the colonnade (Fig. 29), in the act of entering the temple (Fig. 30)—splendid figures in conventional style with much of the color retained. They form one of the concluding plates of *Medinet Habu*, Volume II, and lead us along with the Pharaoh into the temple proper, among the religious scenes (cf. top of Fig. 31) now accumulating for our third large folio volume.

II
THE ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
1929/30

BY UVO HÖLSCHER

INTRODUCTION

Our campaign of 1929/30 made great demands upon the powers of both workmen and leaders, for the north side of the Medinet Habu area which we had undertaken to clear contained far more rubbish than had the south side, which we had cleared during our first season (1927/28). The number of native workmen employed in excavation averaged, as in previous years, from two hundred and fifty to three hundred, about one-fourth of whom were our skilled workers from Guft.

All excavation in rainless Egypt is exceedingly unpleasant because of the troublesome dust which continually rises; but we suffered abnormally in this respect last season while removing the ruins of Coptic houses, where the fine dust was trying to the utmost. At times Medinet Habu was completely enveloped in an opaque and blinding cloud of dust which resembled the thick masses of smoke that hover over a great conflagration. One can thus easily understand how the workmen and their supervisors were handicapped so that at times it became necessary to arrange for a shorter schedule of working hours.

The writer was assisted in the season's work by Messrs. Hans Steckeweh and Harald Hanson. As the former unfortunately had to leave us in the middle of the winter for personal reasons, Mr. Siegfried Heise came to take his place. For a portion of the season Mr. Jack Bolles of the Anatolian Expedition joined us, and Mr. Gordon Loud tarried with us for several weeks on his way to Mesopotamia. The photographic work was carried on by Mr. Leichter, of Luxor, who was with us two or three days of each week. A not inconsiderable part of the work, that of arranging the finds, cataloguing, and the like, was taken over for a time by Frau Hölscher. When special need arose, particularly in philological questions, the epigraphic staff assisted us in all possible ways with service which we gratefully acknowledge.

Thus an excavation which had at first been mostly architectural in interest has gradually grown into an undertaking which touches all branches of science that are involved in Egyptian archeology.

For the next season there remain to us only the clearance of the west side of the Medinet Habu area and a few isolated investigations to be made outside of the great girdle wall, where several puzzling questions are still involved, the answers to which we are eagerly awaiting.

THE COPTIC TOWN OF JĒME

During the season of 1929/30 the area to the north of the Great Temple of Medinet Habu was cleared. The result of the excavation presented a somewhat different aspect from that of the opposite side, which we excavated in our first year and upon which we reported in "Oriental Institute Communications," Nos. 5 and 7. While in that area all the buildings, which formerly projected ten or fifteen meters above ground, had been entirely removed by modern excavators, extensive remains of Coptic houses could be perceived north of the temple even before we began to excavate. Here, therefore, we were confronted with the opportunity and the problem of wresting from the ruins part of the remains of old "Jême," as the town was known in the seventh and eighth centuries.

To be sure, this task had very little connection with our primary object of recovering the plan of the temple and palace area of Ramses III. Still our immediate problem proved to be keenly fascinating and of no little scientific importance as well. For we had before us not an unknown mass of ruins similar to countless others in Egypt, but a town familiar from numerous papyri of the seventh and eighth centuries. These consist of bills of sale, deeds, wills, and the like, which, originating in "Castrum Jême," have given us important insight into the legal situation in Upper Egypt at the time of the Arabic conquest A.D. 640.

It is necessary first of all to admit that unfortunately our secret ambition to unearth some new Jême papyri has not yet met with success. Only papyrus scraps about as large as a finger tip have been found, though we have completely cleared several dozen Coptic houses, including their cellars. This failure to discover papyrus documents is probably more than accidental. It can be assumed that such

papyri as the *fellahin* have brought to light in the past were not left in antiquity as isolated rolls scattered here and there in private dwellings, but rather that they had been deposited in official archives, possibly in the houses of judges or of priests. For there they would not only have been protected against robbery and forgery, but also would have been guaranteed public credence. Since the well-known Jême documents came on the market in groups of considerable size and not individually, it seems probable that, when the ruins of Medinet Habu suffered demolition, the *fellahin* discovered and plundered one or more such archives. Hence our own chances of unearthing papyrus documents are very meager. We shall have to content ourselves with whatever Coptic houses may accidentally have been spared in the outer zone.

Although our excavations have not been rewarded by the discovery of papyri, literary products of a humbler sort have come to light in the form of thousands of Coptic ostraka. These are potsherds and flat limestone flakes on which are written prescribed prayers, priestly admonitions, letters, business accounts, and the like. We may hope that some Coptic authority will find in them, on careful examination, valuable information concerning the time from the late Roman to the beginning of the early Arabic period.

But let us now consider what the excavation itself has revealed. We can clearly distinguish two main strata in this late Roman and Coptic town. In the lower stratum were found several bags and jars of small Roman coins which date, as is well known, from that period of decline in monetary values when single coins were absolutely worthless and only bags and jars containing a large number were accepted in exchange. This level must therefore be dated from the third to the fifth century after Christ. In the second level there appeared only a few of these worthless coins. In contrast, we unearthed two examples of a gold coin—the solidus of Heraclius, the last Byzantine emperor before the Arabic conquest—which would probably date this stratum in the sixth to eighth century. Study of the ostraka may later permit a more exact dating of certain groups of houses.

During these centuries, then, the area around the stone temple of Ramses III was filled with high mud-brick houses (Fig. 32), several of which were partially preserved. They consisted of three stories—



FIG. 32.—RUINS OF THE COPTIC HOUSES WHICH STOOD INSIDE MEDINET HABU AND HAD TO BE REMOVED DURING THE EXCAVATION

cellar, first floor, and second floor. Occasionally there were even traces of a third floor and flat roof.

The floor space in these houses was very limited (Figs. 33 and 34). Most of them consisted of two barrel-vaulted rooms, beside which a similarly vaulted staircase led to the upper floors. Light and air were admitted from the narrow street and possibly from a very narrow rear court. Such courts commonly served several adjacent buildings, and beneath them there were cellars. These, as well as those beneath the houses, usually had no windows, but only vents in their vaulted ceilings. Even on the first floor there were no true windows, only small slits admitting light and air, while on the second floor the windows were of only the most humble dimensions. On the whole, therefore, it must have been depressingly dark and gloomy in these houses. Only at the very top there must have been larger windows divided by columns, for small stone columns fitted for supporting lattice work have been found in the rubbish.

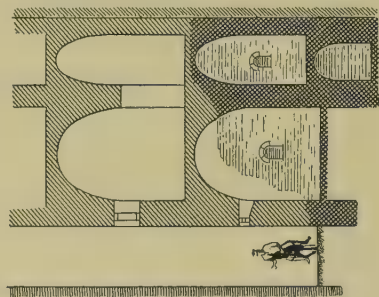
The doorways, like the rooms and stairs, were extraordinarily low and narrow. Those opening upon the street regularly possessed lintels of stone, which were usually decorated with Coptic crosses or similar ornaments.

Immediately inside the entrance in such houses was usually found a pair of water jars standing in a niche or on a stone bench, beneath which, as a rule, stood a bowl for the collection of the water which seeped through the porous clay of the jars and dripped to the ground. Because of this continued moisture the niches and benches for the jars were usually made of stone or burned brick and cemented with lime mortar.

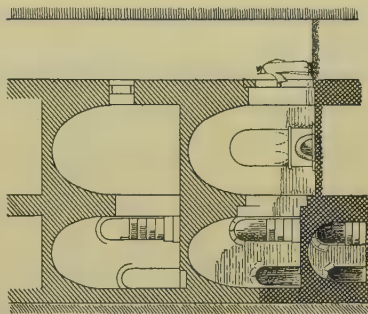
Houses of this type stood clustered together in compact blocks with one or more courts for air and light in the center. Although most of the houses had doors which opened upon the street, there were others which were accessible from the inner court only. In these instances a long, narrow tunnel from the street passed beneath intervening structures and emerged into the court beyond.

Most striking are the extreme crookedness and narrowness of the streets. The widest of those which we have definitely determined had a width of only 1.80 meters, whereas the narrowest were from 1.10 to 1.20 meters. Blind alleys also were very numerous.

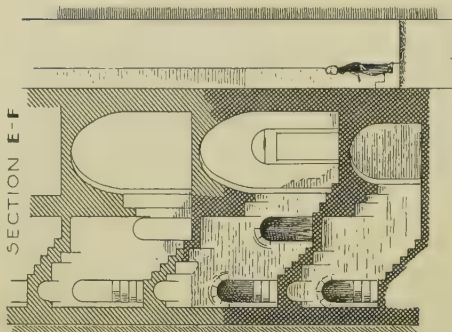
SECTION A-B



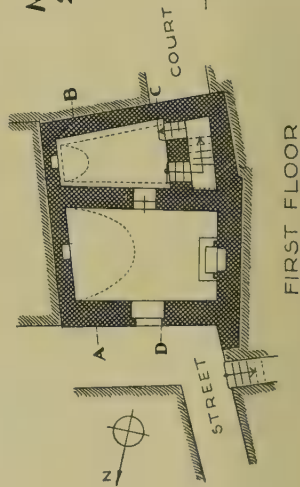
SECTION C-D



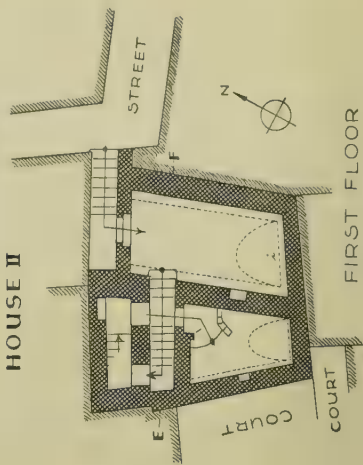
SECTION E-F



HOUSE I



HOUSE II



MEDINET HABU
2 COPTIC HOUSES

Fig. 33.—Two Examples of the Coptic Houses of Medinet Habu

Houses such as have been described were built even upon the ruins of Ramses III's great girdle wall and extended still for some distance



FIG. 34.—RUINS OF A COPTIC HOUSE OF ABOUT THE 8TH CENTURY

This shows cellar with collapsed vault, first story, and stair well

outside of the ancient inclosure. The rear part of Ramses III's temple also was filled during Coptic times with dwellings the doorways of

which are still recognizable, hewn into the stone walls, although the houses themselves have long since been removed. Furthermore, the second court of the temple was appropriated by the Copts, who rebuilt and decorated it to house the "Holy Church of Castrum Jēme." Only a few decades ago, in fact until the "*déblaiement*" of Medinet Habu, a few stone columns which had supported this five-aisled church still stood in place (Fig. 35).

The remains of a second Coptic church have been discovered outside of the Ramessid wall in a southerly direction from the quay by the Fortified Gate. Whether these are the remains of the "Place of Apa Paternuthios," which is often mentioned in the records, is still an unsolved question.

THE OFFICES AND STOREHOUSES OF THE GREAT TEMPLE

Most of the Coptic houses had to be removed, as we wished to push on to the Ramessid level. In doing so, we found that the older strata had for the most part been removed already in antiquity. But it was reserved for the modern *sebbakhin* not only to destroy almost completely the post-Ramessid levels but also, indeed, to strip the walls of Ramses III down to the very foundation trench, in order to secure the greatly prized fertilizer.

As for the Ramessid plan, in spite of woeful destruction it revealed itself almost in its entirety in the course of our excavation (Fig. 36). We have seen (*OIC*, Nos. 5 and 7) that the central building of the whole area, the Great Temple of Ramses III, is boxed into a rectangular inner inclosure by a massive turreted surrounding wall. Inside the area thus formed, the king's palace lay south of the temple. Immediately west of the palace was an open place, a garden or court; farther on were situated several treasuries. This year the district north of the temple has revealed the temple storehouses.

To understand fully what we have before us, it must be kept in mind that in Ramessid times money had not yet come into existence as a medium of exchange. All revenues of the temple, therefore, as well as all disbursements, had to be paid in kind. For that reason extensive storehouses for grain, oil, wine, beer, leather, metals, and similar products were required; and a well-organized administration had to see to it that all revenues due were promptly delivered and recorded and that all expenditures were likewise tabulated and verified.



FIG. 35.—REMAINS OF COPTIC CHURCH WHICH STOOD IN SECOND COURT OF THE GREAT TEMPLE,
AS SEEN BEFORE 1891, THE YEAR IN WHICH THAT COURT WAS CLEARED

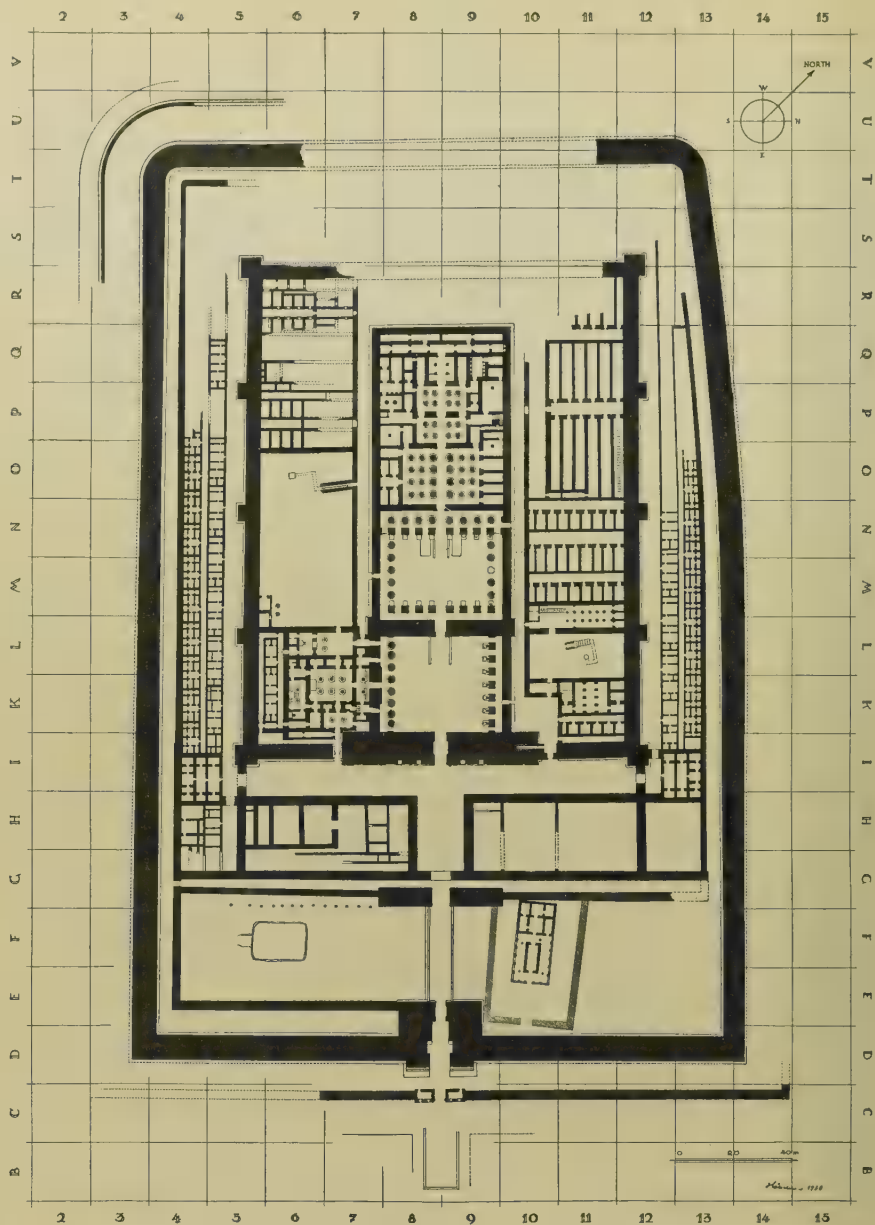


FIG. 36.—GROUND PLAN OF RAMSES III'S TEMPLE AND PALACE AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES AFTER THE SEASON OF 1929/30

Compare the complete plan of Medinet Habu before excavation (*OIC*, No. 5, Fig. 27).

We can best picture the activity surrounding the temple of that day if we imagine ourselves taking part in it. We have come, perhaps, as envoys from some small village or estate, commissioned to bear a certain quota of wheat as taxes to the temple storehouses. Arriving with our laden donkeys before the great pylon of the temple, we are directed to enter by the first gate through the wall north of the pylon into a small, square court, where we are to announce ourselves. Leaving the donkeys outside, we go straight on through two doors to the court of administration. There, near the stairway which leads down into the great well, we wait until we are summoned. Then we proceed across the court to the office of the scribes. Here search is made through the papyrus rolls, in order to verify the amount that we are to deliver, our load is weighed, the result recorded, and a receipt filled out.

The office we have just entered, which adjoins the court on the north, consists of a three-aisled hall. In the two side aisles the scribes sit at work before their papyrus rolls, while in the center the chief scribe issues orders and signs completed documents. At the rear are situated three small chambers. The central one is probably a chapel dedicated to Thoth, who, in the form of an ape, is thus honored in the very offices of his devotees. Under his protection, to left and right, are archives for the papyrus documents, which are stored there in wooden chests. In front of the building occupied by the scribes themselves is a small court furnished with a stone bench on which we, along with many of our fellows, squat and patiently wait until all of our documents have been completed.¹

At last all is in order and ready. Passing the door of the guard-room, we come out into a long passage which extends along the temple wall. Here we are instructed to unload and take the bags to the store-rooms. The first of these may have been designed for wine, oil, or products of a similar nature. We are directed, however, to the larger ones beyond, which serve as the granaries. These consist of two rows

¹ The arrangement of such an office is known quite exactly from a representation in the tomb of a vizier of Ramses II, published by Ludwig Borchardt in *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, XLIV (1907), 59-61. It is pleasantly surprising to find that the entire ground plan there indicated is almost exactly reproduced at Medinet Habu.

of long, barrel-vaulted rooms, reached from a central corridor. Each room is a sort of silo which can be filled by pouring the grain through openings in the flat roof and emptied through the doors opening upon the corridor. Our task is finally completed; relieved of our burdens, with receipt in hand, we remount our donkeys and ride gaily homeward.

RAMSES III'S EARLIER AND LATER BUILDING PLANS

I wish now to refer to a few other particulars of the Ramessid plan. As we have stated in former reports, there were two palaces of Ramses III, the later of which was erected above the foundation walls of an earlier one that had been destroyed. As a result of our excavation, we are able to follow both these periods of Ramses III's building activities throughout the entire temple complex.

The original plan contained only the buildings which were embraced by the turreted inner wall. The dwellings of the priests, servants, and workmen, as well as the gardens, stables, and other farm buildings, were perhaps to have been outside in a separate little community. When, in the second half of his reign, Ramses constructed the great girdle wall with its Fortified Gate, he was able to inclose all the service and administration buildings within its protective embrace. Possibly toward the end of his life Ramses III no longer considered his temple and palace in Upper Egypt sufficiently safe, for undoubtedly the political and economic situation at that time became distinctly disturbing. Perhaps it was for that reason that he secured himself at Medinet Habu by means of a fortification similar to the boundary fortresses with which he had become acquainted in the north.

The expansion which was to develop under the new building scheme was, however, never fully completed. It is true that the massive wall and the Fortified Gate were finished after a fashion, but probably with the death of the royal builder work on all his operations was halted. Though the harem apartments lacked only a few finishing touches, they remained as they were, while the rows on rows of servants' quarters toward the west and the buildings in the front part of the temple area were left absolutely uncompleted. Now and then later Ramessids attempted to finish some of these structures, but with altered plans and in a wretched manner entirely unworthy of him who had planned the originals. But such minor imperfections and short-

comings sink into insignificance when we contemplate as a whole the plan of Ramses III's temple area, which presents to us quite a unique picture of architectural composition in early antiquity.

THE SMALL TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU

The so-called Small Temple of Medinet Habu deserves our very special interest. It originated, as is well known, in the 18th dynasty, about 1480 B.C. Three hundred years later Ramses III incorporated it into his vast compound, where it served as a sanctuary of Amon along with the Great Temple. The latter, however, since it was dedicated in the first place to the mortuary cult of Ramses III himself, naturally after his death, and especially toward the end of the 20th dynasty, gradually lost its importance and later was probably abandoned entirely as a sanctuary. The older temple, on the other hand, even after the Ramessid era, was considered the principal sacred place of the district, and as time went on enjoyed ever increasing respect and veneration (cf. Fig. 37).



FIG. 37.—AN EGYPTIAN LADY, PROBABLY OF THE 26TH DYNASTY

Head from a life-size statue of black granite, found near the Small Temple in 1927.

The Small Temple, therefore, passed through a much longer historical development and underwent reconstruction and expansion in practically every dynasty, so that in its present form it is a very characteristic example of the development of Egyptian temple-designing from the glorious imperial age down through the centuries to the beginning of Christianity.

In its original form the Small Temple of the 18th dynasty, as we see it on the general plan (Fig. 36, F 10), lying close behind the Fortified Gate and oblique to the axis of the Ramessid temple, is a peripteral structure. That is, around the nucleus, which served as a sanctuary for the sacred bark of the god, are pillared halls open on three sides except for screen walls connecting the pillars as far as the main en-

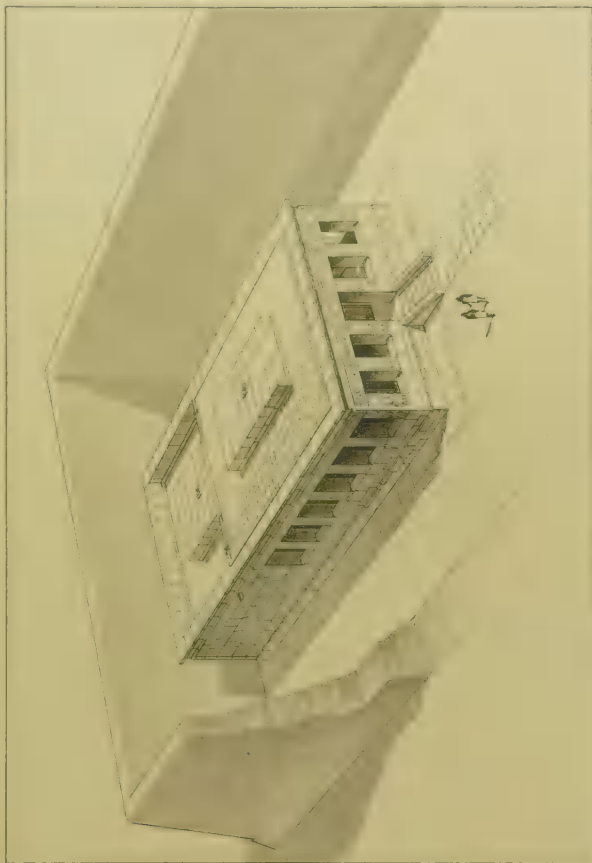
trance (Fig. 38). Only at the rear were added several closed cult chambers. The whole edifice stands upon a slightly elevated platform (see reconstruction, Plate I).

Evidently the architectural theory in this temple, as in those of the Greeks and Romans, was that the observer should obtain an impressive view of the sacred structure from three sides, if not from all. With remarkable inconsistency, however, in total disregard of this theory the temple was inclosed as in a huge box by a high girdle wall of mud brick. Incredible as it may appear, the wall is not of later date, but, as the stamped bricks and foundation deposits show, was built by Queen Hatshepsut at the very time when the stone temple itself was erected. Thus we find corroborated here in this peripteral temple the underlying idea found in all Egyptian temple construction, namely, that the building did not stand open to the gaze of the general public, but was only for a privileged and honored few who slowly and decorously in solemn procession made pilgrimage to its jealously guarded precincts and were permitted to view its holy of holies. The splendid pillared hall in this case is but an open passage around the sanctuary of the sacred bark.

Certainly there must have been several temples of peripteral type in the 18th dynasty. That dating from the time of Amenhotep III on Elephantine must have been particularly impressive. When it was recorded a hundred and thirty years ago by the French expedition, it still stood in excellent condition. Since that day, however, it has completely disappeared. The Small Temple of Medinet Habu remains, therefore, the best-preserved example of this beautiful as well as rare type of Egyptian temple.

It is not within the realm of the excavator to discuss the reliefs and inscriptions which cover the walls of the Small Temple. Suffice it to mention that representations here are among the most important historical documents relative to disturbances over the succession during the reigns of Hatshepsut and the Thutmosids. Furthermore, one may observe how under the reign of the heretic king, Ikhnaton, the name and image of Amon were everywhere chiseled out, only to be restored by Harmhab and Seti I. How still later Rameses III, who removed the old inclosure in order to incorporate the Small Temple into his more ambitious building enterprise, desired to have its walls

PLATE I



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THE SMALL TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU
BUILT BY QUEEN HATSHEPSUT

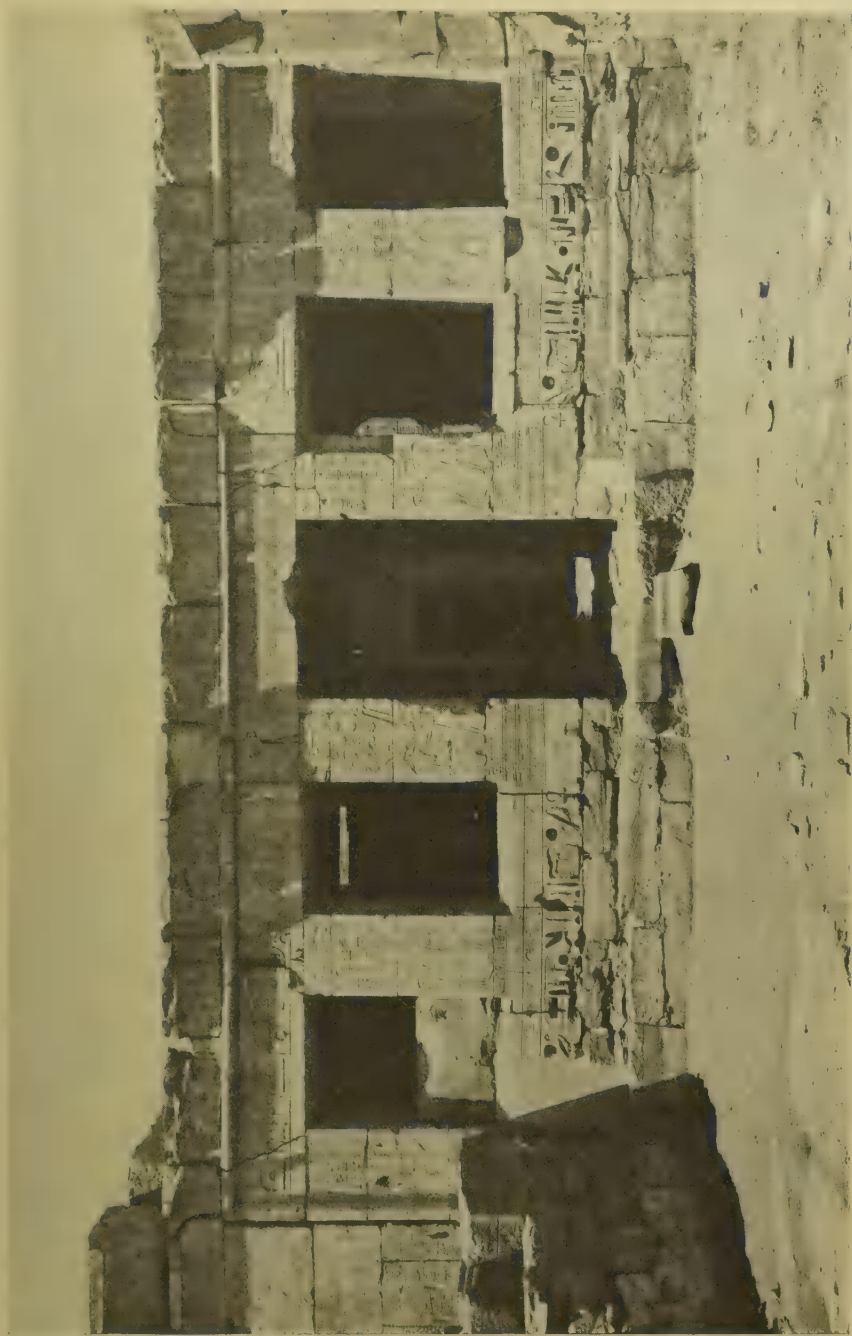


FIG. 38.—FRONT OF THE SMALL TEMPLE OF THE 18TH DYNASTY, PRESENT STATE
The added structures belong to the expansion of King Achoris (about 390 B.C.)

bear testimony to his glory also, is evidenced by the deeply cut hieroglyphs characteristic of his reign. In like measure, the priest-kings of the 21st dynasty could not refrain from immortalizing the part they had played in the history of the temple.

The second period of building expansion for the Small Temple began with the 25th dynasty, when the Ethiopian kings attempted through a magnificent building program to restore Thebes, the religious center of Upper Egypt, to the glory it had possessed during the Empire. The expansion that the Small Temple now underwent (Plate II) was wholly inconsistent with the original plan of the building. In front of the peripteros was erected a long, narrow hall ending in a pylon (Fig. 39). The length of the structure was strongly emphasized and increased; the entrance was brought into prominence by means of the pylon; but the original beauty of the 18th dynasty peripteros was totally destroyed.

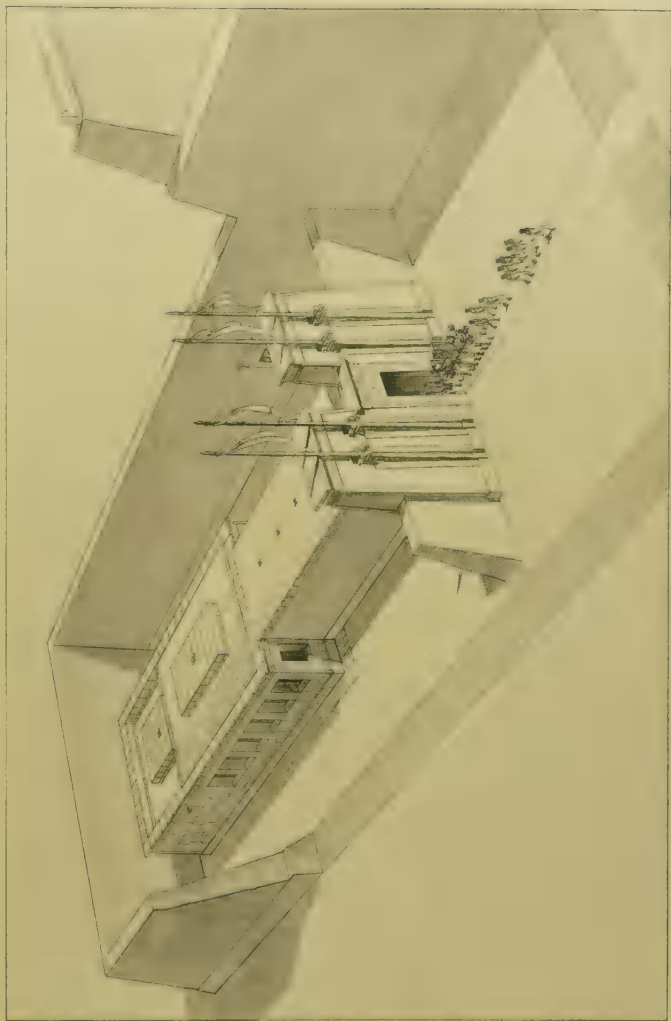
At the same time the girdle wall—as it was in Hatshepsut's time—was restored, and the great Ramessid wall which, in violation of the original plan, had been built in front of the entrance was removed as thoroughly as possible and replaced by the above-mentioned pylon. In the interior of the temple several changes and restorations were also undertaken by Amenirdis, the sacerdotal princess of Thebes, who belonged to the Ethiopian royal house.

During this time and well into the Saitic period (26th dynasty) the Small Temple must have enjoyed the greatest of veneration, for in its immediate vicinity not a few persons of high degree were buried. Among them were Amenirdis, sister of the Ethiopian Pharaoh Shabaka, and her adopted daughter Shepnupet II (Fig. 40), daughter of the Ethiopian Piankhi.¹

The next picture (Plate III) shows the temple when, in the midst of Persian dominance, there suddenly rose once more a native kingdom, and consequently the revenues of the land were available for local enterprises. Achoris in the first half of the fourth century before Christ built a wide three-aisled hall of stone to replace the narrow mud-brick hall of the Ethiopians, and two wings were added at the sides between the temple and its girdle wall. A few years later Nectanebo I built an open columned porch with wooden beams supporting

¹ This rectifies an editorial error in *OIC*, No. 7, p. 4.

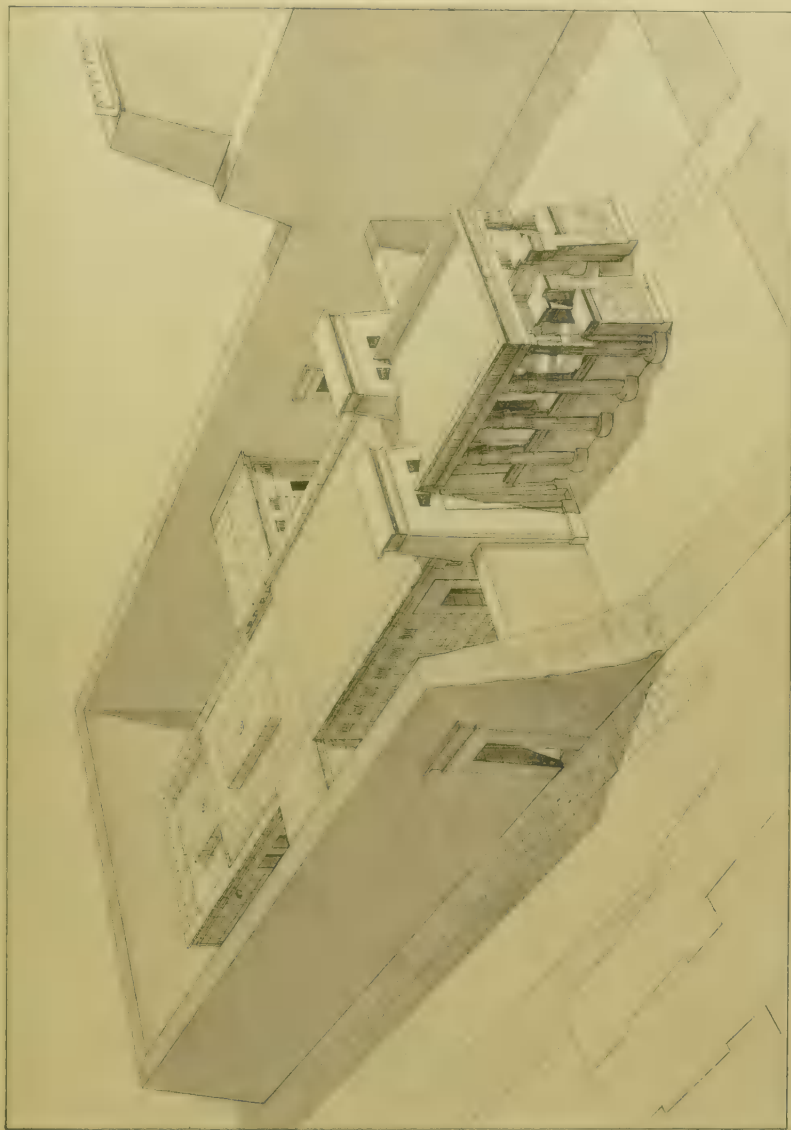
PLATE II



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THE SMALL TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU
PERIOD OF THE ETHIOPIAN KINGS

PLATE III



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THE SMALL TEMPLE OF MEDINET HABU, FOURTH CENTURY B. C.



FIG. 39.—THE ETHIOPIAN PYLON OF THE SMALL TEMPLE WITH THE COLUMNED PORCH OF NECTANEBO (4TH CENTURY B.C.)

the roof and with stone screen walls connecting the columns (Fig. 39). This was to serve as a reception room from which to conduct the sa-

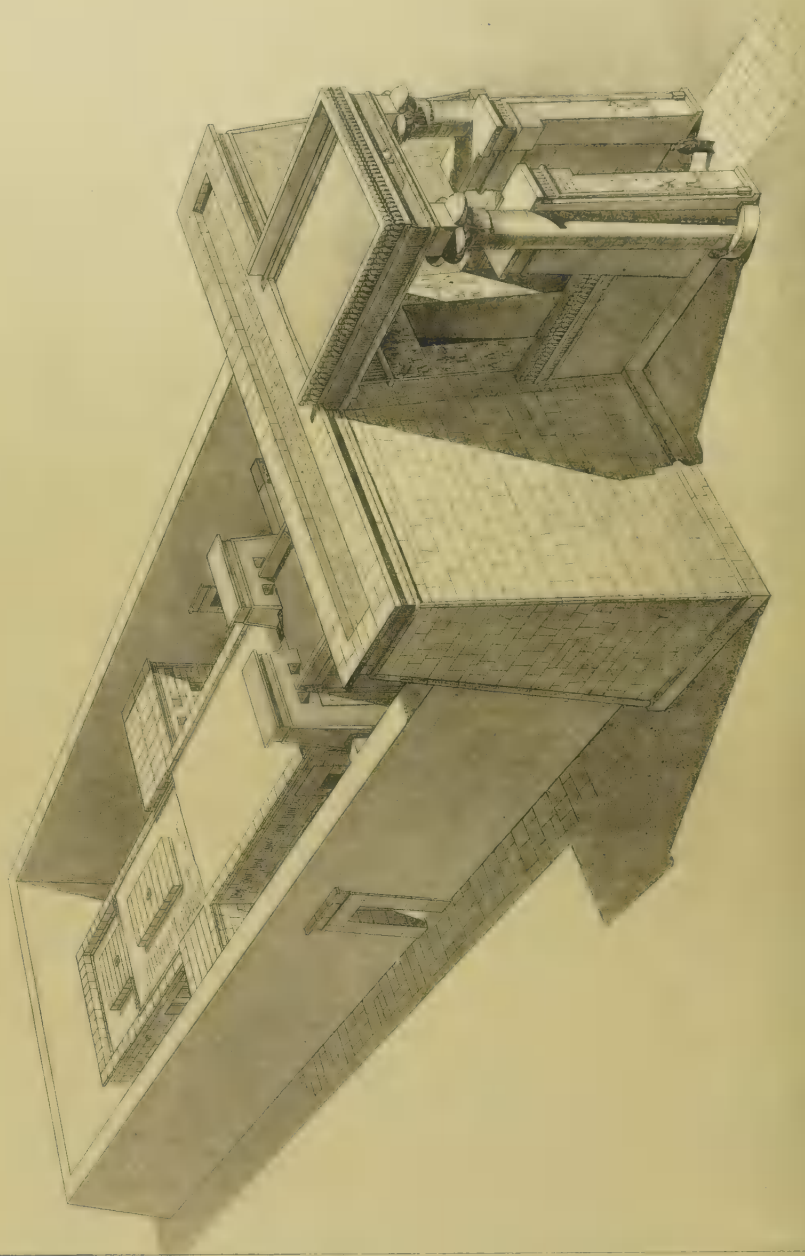


FIG. 40.—SHEPNUPET II, DAUGHTER OF THE ETHIOPIAN PIANKHI

Half life-size statue of black slate with remains of original gilding, found near her mortuary chapel at Medinet Habu in 1928.

cred procession into the temple. The structure as of this time affords us a glimpse into a late Egyptian temple before the Greek invasion.

In the Ptolemaic period which followed, the complex was once



again expanded to the extent of a mighty stone pylon which was erected in front of it (Plate IV). To be exact, it was stone on three



FIG. 41.—CAPITAL OF COLUMN IN FRONT OF THE PTOLEMAIC PYLON OF THE SMALL TEMPLE

sides only, for the interior and back consisted of the already existing mud-brick wall, which was simply mantled on the front and sides with stone in order to give the effect of a solid stone pylon. Before this pylon was erected an airy portico supported by two tall columns.

The traditional two-towered pylon form with flagstaffs in front of

it—a form which had already been altered in the Ethiopian pylon through the addition of the columned porch of Nectanebo—had by this time been entirely abandoned. The pylon constituted now merely the mighty rear wall of the portico, whose wide-spreading roof offered shade and coolness to pilgrim and worshiper. It is interesting to observe in detail how, in this Ptolemaic period which has been so



FIG. 42.—THE PTOLEMAIC PYLON OF THE SMALL TEMPLE WITH THE UNFINISHED ROMAN PORTICO AND COURT

much neglected and so little appreciated by students of the history of art, new forms and motives force their way into Egyptian artistic expression. Numerous charming devices appear, the effect of which is enhanced, especially in our case, by the well-preserved colors (Fig. 41).

The temple was to experience its last remodeling in Roman times in the second century after Christ. Beside the two columns of the Ptolemaic portico three others were commenced on each side, and a forecourt was placed in front of it (Fig. 42). Had this project been carried out, the temple would have presented an eight-columned front, with high screen walls between the columns, and so would have con-

veyed an impression similar to that given by the temples at Edfu, Esneh, and Dendera. However, since this plan was never completed, we are not in position to reconstruct with certainty its intended appearance.

During Coptic times the inner rooms of the Small Temple were utilized as a Christian church. There remain traces of wall paintings, among which the figure of St. Menas can still be recognized.

Thus in our brief review of the architectural development of the Small Temple we can see how it continued to be esteemed and employed as a holy place from the moment when the district of Medinet Habu first appeared in history until the decline of the town of Jēme. Its architectural history can tell us not a little of the passing of the ages, the development of the race, and the transformation of customs and religious beliefs.

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